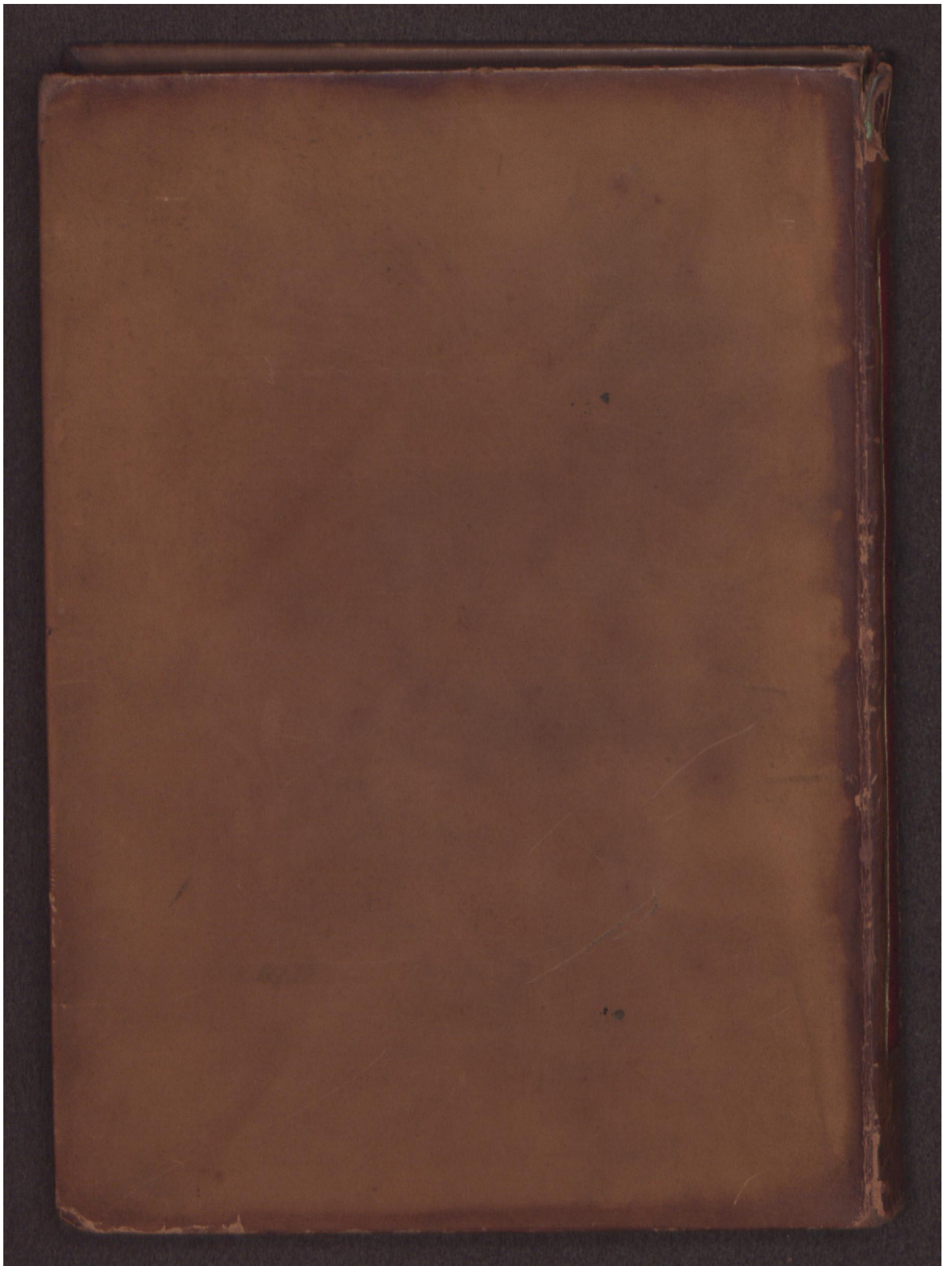


Early European Books, Copyright © 2009 ProQuest LLC.
Images reproduced by courtesy of the Royal Library, Copenhagen.
LN 810 4° copy 1





Early European Books, Copyright © 2009 ProQuest LLC.
Images reproduced by courtesy of the Royal Library, Copenhagen.
LN 810 4° copy 1



Early European Books, Copyright © 2009 ProQuest LLC.
Images reproduced by courtesy of the Royal Library, Copenhagen.
LN 810 4° copy 1



Early European Books, Copyright © 2009 ProQuest LLC.
Images reproduced by courtesy of the Royal Library, Copenhagen.
LN 810 4^o copy 1





1-337

4°

Box



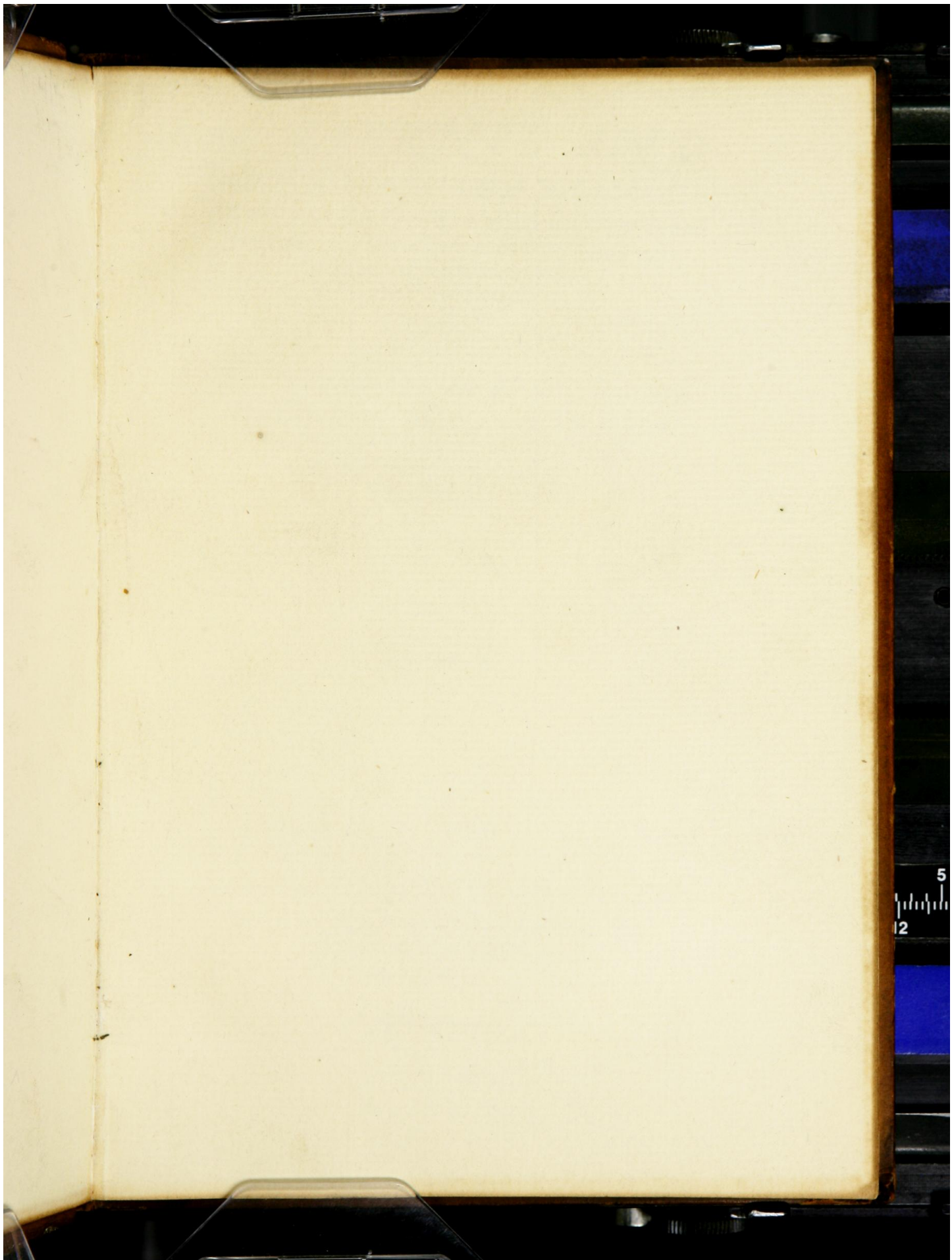
LN 810

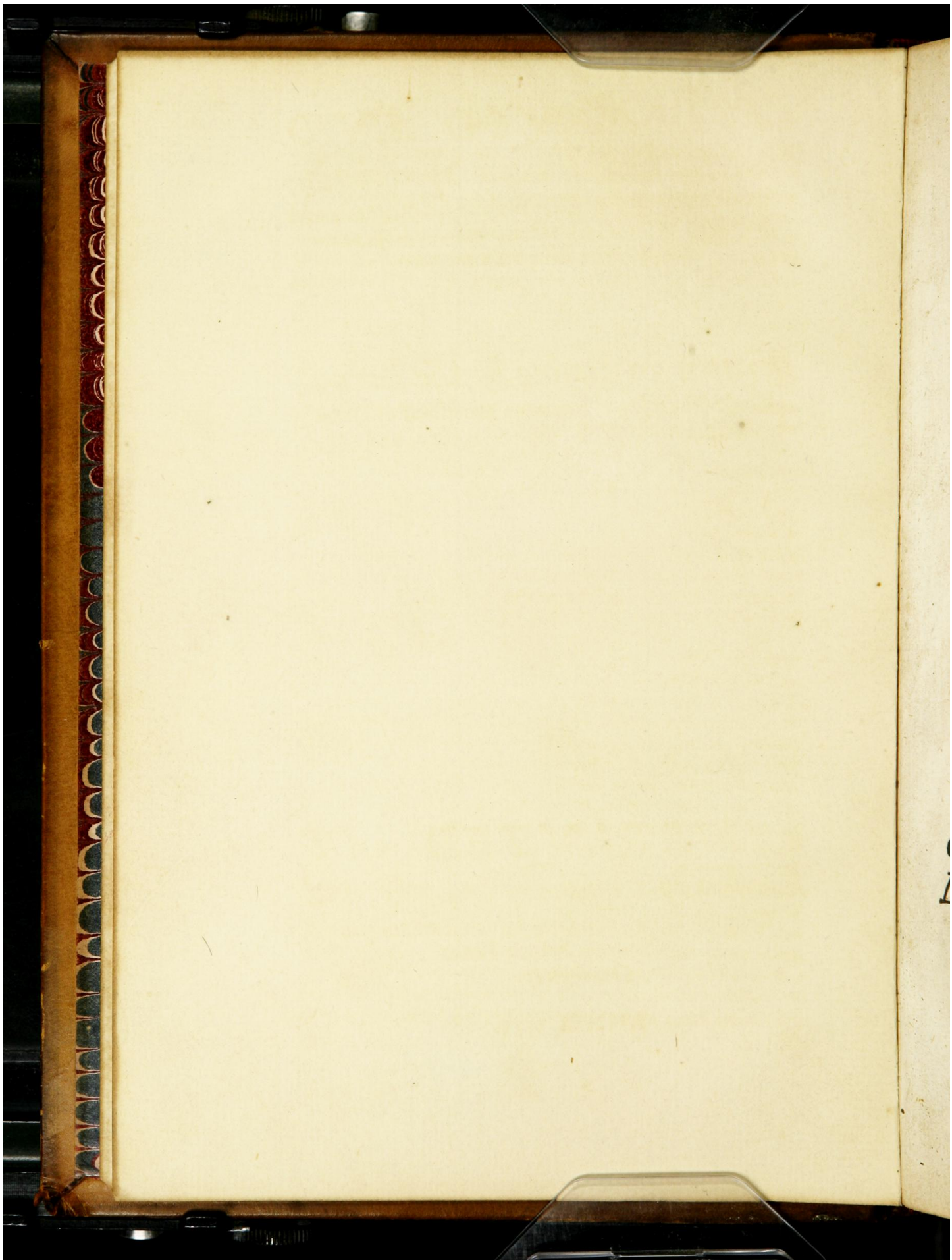
ex. 1

M



L.N. 810. Kay Høge eks.





*A LEARNED AND
fruitefull Commentarie vpon the E-
pistle of Iames the Apostle, vvherein are diligently and
profitably entreated all such matters and chiefe com-
mon places of Religion as are tou-
ched in the same E-
pistle :*

*Written in Latine by the learned
Clerke Nicholas Hemminge, professour of Diui-
nitie in the Vniuersitie of Hafnie, and
nevly translated into English
by VV. G.*

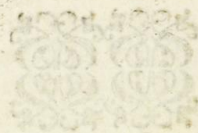


*IMPRINTED AT
London by Thomas Woodcocke, and
Gregorie Seton, and are to be solde at the signe
of the blacke Beare in Paules
Churchyarde.*

ANNO. 1577.

A LEARNED AND
Fruitfull Commentarie upon the
Epistle of James the Apostle, wherein are diligently and
presumably considered all such matters and things con-
cerning places of Religion as are con-
tained in the same E-
pistle:

Written in Latine by the learned
Claudio Nicholas Hemminge, Professor of Divi-
nine in the University of Hamie, and
newly translated into English
by W. G.



PRINTED AT
London by Thomas Woodcocke, and
Gregorie Seton, and are to be sold at the signe
of the blacke Beare in Pauls
Church-yard.



Kay Hoegs Samsling
1970.

To the godly and reuerend Father,
and faythfull Minister of Christ, M. Alexander Novvell,
Deane of the Cathedrall Church of S. Paule in London,
W. Gace wisheth grace and peace from God
the father through Christ Ie-
sus our Lorde.



GOD FROM THE BEGINNING,
hath as in a most cleare and euident glasse, sette
forth himselfe to be beholden and knowne of
vs, euen in his creatures, & in the orderly course
of the worlde. For when we see and consider the
vntimeasurable greatnes of the worlde, and the
partes thereof to be so framed, as they could not
possibly in beautie be fayrer, nor for profit bet-
ter: we vnderstande thereby the omnipotent power of God in crea-
ting them, his diuine wisdom in ordering and disposing them, his
infinite goodnes in continually preseruing them, that they runne not
to ruine and vtter decay, but are by him vpholden, euen to the neces-
sarie vse and sustentation of mans lyfe. Although this creation of the
worlde, and the maruaylous ordering and preseruing thereof were
sufficient whereby men might knowe God, and worship him being
knowne, or else be without excuse: yet it hath pleased God of his
great mercie to giue vnto vs his worde, wherein he hath more plainly
and fully reuealed himselfe, and his will, to our most singular commo-
ditie and comfort. For we through the fall of our first parentes being
become blinde in vnderstanding, corrupt in desiring, and wicked in
working, are by the worde of God fruitfully of vs receyued, lightned
in our myndes, reformed in our affections, and ordered aright in our
doings: in so much as the Princely Prophet Dauid sayth, that the
meanes whereby a yong man shall cleanse his waye, is to rule himselfe
after this worde, which worde also he pronounceth to be his delight
and his counsellor, yea he perceyued it to be of such vertue and excel-
lencie, that he preferreth it before all worldly treasures whatsoeuer: I
loue, sayth he, thy commaundements aboue golde and precious stone.
Agayne, thy lawe is dearer vnto me then thousandes of golde and sil-
uer. But I mynde not to enter here into the worthy commendation
of this worde, or to rehearse the manifolde and most singular commo-
dities, which redounde to the godly thereby. Onely that which I haue
mentioned out of Dauid may suffice to declare that it is a treasure of
all other most precious.

Forasmuch then as the worde of God is a treasure so excellent, what
A. ii. shall

The Epistle.

shall we thinke or say of the true and sincere Preachers and expounders thereof? VVe acknowledge great friendship in them, by whose meanes we attayne to an earthly commoditie, and howe shall we be affected towards them, which open to vs the way to an heauenly treasure? VVe thinke our selues much beholden to those, which minister vnto vs the foode of this fraile life: but vwhat recompence shall we render vnto them, by whose meanes we come to enioy the foode of euerlasting lyfe? VVherefore right worshipfull, if I should render a reason of my labour bestowed in translating this treatise into the english tongue, I thinke it were sufficient if I should say no more, but that the word of God is therein soundly and sincerely expounded. Although I may descend vnto particular pointes, and shew other weightie causes thereof. For you are not ignoraunt howe the Papists both haue bine and also be grieuous enemies to the doctrine of iustification by saythe onely in Christ, pretending for their chiefe defence the testimonie of S. Iames, where he seemeth to attribute iustification to workes and not to sayth onely, whose authoritie they haue wrongfully wrested and misinterpreted. VVhereby they haue not onely erred themselues, but also haue caused many other to erre. VVhich false interpretation of theirs is in this treatise very learnedly and thoroughly improued, and the meaning of the Apostle truly and playnely declared.

Againe, your wisdome doth well know, that the mysteries of God are wisely and discretely to be disposed, and not onely the doctrine of sayth faithfully to be taught, but also the doctrine of workes diligently to be vrged, both to stoppe the sclaunderous mouthes of many prating Papists, and also to remedie many abuses very rife among vs. For whereas the sincere preachers of Gods worde doe according to the Scriptures teach, that the bloud of Christ is a sufficient salue for the sore of sinne, and that we are iustified by sayth alone in him, without mens merits, workes, or satisfactions: many sclaundering Papists are not ashamed most falsly to affirme, that they are louers of lusts, preachers of present pleasure, and giuers of libertie to all licentious liuing, and making no store of good workes, doe cast onely sayth vnder mens elbowes to leane vpon. VVhen as the true preachers haue alway preached, and all the writings of the godly haue most diligently taught, that that sayth, which is not liuely and fruitefull of good works did neuer profite any but to the increase of their owne damnation: and contrariwise, that that sayth, whereby alone according to the Scriptures, they teach that we are iustified, hath good workes necessarily accompanying it, not as causes of our saluation, but as necessarie fruites of a liuely sayth, as is also in this treatise of S. Iames very learnedly and diligently declared. VVhereby not onely the Papists are admonished,

chas

The Epistle.

that they doe not open their lying lips so wrongfully to rayle vpon the true preachers of Gods word, but also many other are aduertised of their dutie, who by profession are Christians, but in life more then prophane, who are not ashamed to say: if faith iustifie without works, then let vs worke nothing, but let vs onely beleue and doe what we list, and so like carnall and carelesse liuers they turne the libertie of the Spirit into wantonnes and fleshly libertie. But let these men vnderstand, that such prophane profession and carelesse contempt dooth highly displease almighty God, and is diligently detected and sharply reproofed of his faythfull ministers, both in wordes and writings, whose wholesome admonitions let them carefully regard, and be aduertised and brought thereby to follow in workes that which they profes in words, least they deceiue them selues, and at the last reape most bitter fruites of their fayned fayth.

Not onely these are in this present treatise admonished of their dutie, but many other most profitable poyntes of Christian doctrine and godly instructions are learnedly handled and liuely set forth therein, vvh whereby the Christian readers may learne to direct their doinges, and order their life according to the prescript rule of Gods vvorde. As for them vvhich obstinately refuse, or at the least vvise little regarde such godly instructions as God hath in these dayes (his name be highlye praysed therefore) by his faythfull Ministers both by preaching and vvriting offered vnto them: let them remember that they that are of God heare and receiue Gods vvord, and if they doe the contrarie that they are not of God: let them know, if they be now vvearie of it and come to the lothing of it, that their soule is fallen into a daungerous disease. For as a good appetite to naturall foode is a token of the helth of the body, and to refuse and loth the same is a sure signe of some sickenes or disease: so is it likevvise in the soule refusing or lothing the heauenly foode of Gods vvord. Againe let them call to minde, that it vv as aunsvvered to the rich glutton being tormented in hell, vvhen he vvould haue one sent from the dead to admonish his brethren, least they came into that torment, that his brethren had Moses and the Prophets, vvhom they ought to heare, if they vvould auoyde the like fierie flames and hellish torments. Let them assure themselues that the day vvill come, vvhen Christ Iesus shall vvith vnspeakable maiestie and infinite power come to iudge the quicke and the dead, vvhen from the furthest corners of the vvorld shall be heard the sound of the trumpet, vvherevvith all shall be called to the iudgement seate, then the secretes of all heartes shall be layde open, and the doinges of euery man playnely discovered. Then the vngodly and vvicked ones, vvwhich haue in this life despised the vvord of God,

A.iiij.

ncg-

The Epistle.

neglected his commaundements and will containd therein, and not repented them of their wickednes, shall in stede of comfort on euery side feele extreme dread and horroure. If they looke behinde them they shall see the world consuming with fire, if they looke on the right hand, they shall perceiue a sinnefull conscience accusing them, if they turne to the left, there shall be the deuell readye to receiue them into endeles paynes, if they looke before them, they shall see a terrible and iust iudge comming to iudge them according to their wicked works. VWhereas the godly voyde of all these dreaddfull terrours, shall see a most louing Sauour, who shall then admitte them wholly into the full fruition of eternall ioy and blessednes.

Seing then the case thus standeth, it is requisite that all men, which minde to be saued, doe search the Scriptures which testifie of this Sauour, doe diligently heare and reade the worde of God, doe vse such meanes as God hath appoynted to come to the knowledge thereof, and knowing it, doe follow it in their life and conuersation, yea and doe become most heartely thankfull vnto God, that it hath pleased him in mercy to sende to reigne ouer vs, not a tyrannicall Herod to oppresse vs, but a most gracious Princes so in peace and godlynnes to gouerne vs, that the Gospell of Iesus Christ hath not in any age had freer passage, nor hath bin more abundantly and truly preached and set forth, which God for his Christes sake graunt long to continue. So farre then ought all to be of from despising or neglecting the worde and the Preachers and Ministers thereof, that they ought to acknowledge the enioying of it to be an inestimable benefite of God, and to shewe themselues thankfull for so great a benefite, not onely in hearing, reading, and meditating of it, but also according to their abilitie and power it setting in forth and making it knowne vnto other. VWherefore I, according to that small talent, which God hath bestowed vpon me, haue employed my traueil in translating this treatise into our mother tounge, that those my godly country men, which are ignorant of the Latine tongue may become partakers of such Christian doctrine, wholesome admonitions, and godly instructions as are containd therein: VWhich treatise, reuerend Father, I thought good to publishe the rather vnder the protection of your name, that therby it might be the more vwillingly accepted, and the better lyked of many, vwho haue of a long time knowne you to be a learned and saythfull preacher of Gods vvorde, and an earnest furtherer of all godlynnes. VWhich God graunt that you may long be, to the great aduancement of his glory, the singular commoditie of his Church, and the dayly comfort of your owne conscience.

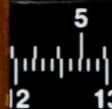
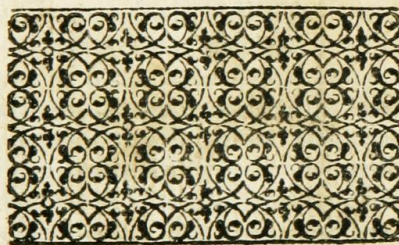
Your worships humbly at commaundment, VV. Gace.

¶ *Faultes escaped in the printing of
this treatise gentle reader cor-
rect as followeth.*

Fol. 17. pag. 2. lin. 5. for tabernanacle, reade, tabernacle.

*Fol. 55. pag. 1. lin. 11. 14. 16. Passe ouer this worde (part) as
being superfluous.*

Fol. 62. pag. 2. lin. 21. for dutie, reade, benefite.



¶ Faultes escaped in the printing of
this treatise gentle reader con-
rect as followeth.

Fol. 17. pag. 2. lin. 5. for *for* read *for*.
Fol. 25. pag. 1. lin. 14. 15. Pass over this word (but) as
being superfluous.
Fol. 61. pag. 2. lin. 21. for *but* read *and*.



The Argument of the Epistle Fol. 1.

of Iames the Apostle.



OVER THINGS IN MY IVDGEMENT are diligently to be vveighed and considered in the beginning of the exposition of euery treatise of the holy Scripture, to vvhit, vvho is the author of it, vvhat occasion there vvas to vvrite it, vvhat is the ende and purpose of it, and vvhat is the maner, methode, or order of handling it. For these four being aptly and rightly declared are as it vv ere a certaine light before the reader to guide him to the entrance of euery treatise of the holy Scripture. Of these therefore I vvill speake in order, vvhereby the argument of this Epistle may be the better vnderstande.

The author of this Epistle vvas Iames the Apostle, vvho is called the brother of the Lord. He, together with the rest of the Apostles, vvas not onely the space of three yeares instructed by the voyce and spirite of the Lorde: but also after the resurrection of Christ vvith the other Apostles receiued the holye Ghost, and a commaundement to preach the Gospell to all nations, and on the day of Pentecost vvas againe by a visible signe authorised and confirmed in his Apostleship. Hereof it appeareth vvhat is to be iudged of this Epistle, to vvhit, that vve must giue no lesse credit to it, then to the voyce of God, for the author thereof is the Apostle of Iesus Christ, vvho at the last sealed the Gospell of Christ vvith his blood. For vvhen he taught Christ to bee the conquerer of death, and to sit at the right hand of God in heauen, the Ievves did cast stones at him, and at the length he kneeling vpon his knees, and praying for his persecutours, vvas slayne vvith a fullers clubbe, and that not long before the citie vvas assaulted by Vespasian. VVwhether therefore thou considerest the ministerie of God, vvherin this man did labour, eyther his life, eyther his confession, or his ende, thou hast a testimonie of the infallible truth of his doctrine.

The occasiō which Iames had to write, seemeth to be double, one the persecutiō of the Church, an other the hypocrisie in many. How great the persecution of the Church vvas in the time of Iames, the Ecclesiasticall historie doth teache at large. For the Ievves were not onely afflicted by being disperfed through the vvhole vvorld: but also they vv ere euen almost ouervvhelmed vvith diuers tentations of heretikes and deuels. For as invvardly they vv ere molested by false brethren: so outvvardly by tyrānes they vv ere prouoked to forsake their professiō, sometime vvith threatninges sometime vvith promises. Hypocrisie also did not a litle offend them. For many did professe Christ, and acknowvledging him to be a sauour, did extoll his benefites, but they liued vvithout a liuely fayth and repentance. VVith these troubles vvas the Church then tossed, vvith these vexations vvas the spouse of Christ

B.j.

The author of this Epistle vvho & vvhat he vvas.

Of vvhat authoritie this Epistle is, and from vv whence the same authoritie is taken.

The occasion vv which moued Iames to vvrite this Epistle, is of tvvvo sortes.

The argument.

then afflicted, which when Iames did see, he tooke therupon occasion to vwrite, that by some meanes he might remedy these euils.

The end and purpose of the Apostle.

Of this occasion the scope and purpose of Iames in this Epistle may be easily vnderstande. For all which he here sayth, tendeth vnto this ende, not onely to confirme and strengthen Christians and those that be godly in deede, agaynst the offence of affliction, vvhom he exhorteth vnto patience, that they should not, being overcome vvith tē-
tations, giue ouer their confession, but rather looke to the euent and end of affliction: but also that he may call backe hypocrites from their error, whom as he teacheth hovv vayne the boasting of fayth is vvith-
out a liuely confidence in God and the true frutes of faith: so he exhorteth them vnto maners vvorthy of a Christian profession, and dehorteth them from the vices contrarie thereunto, except they had rather suffer iust punishment for their stubburnnesse and disobedience. The maner or order of handling is somevvhat free and bold, as is vvont to be in exhorting and reprovving, vvhich I vvill diligently shew in the exposition of euerie chapter.

The maner and order.

The profite & vse of this Epistle.

But hovv necessarie this Epistle is in our churches at this daye, he may easily vnderstand: vvhich seeth that the most part that vvill be called Christians, doe boast of a vayne and a dead faith: VVhich foolishnesse our Apostle doth discouer and most iustly condemne. Agayne, he vvhich dayly beholdeth vvith hovv many and sundry vices (discipline more and more decaying) christian people are polluted and defiled, will without all dout confesse, that there is neede of some Iames, who may freely and boldly reprehend and condemne these sins which are so common and rife among vs. Besides all this the author of this Epistle deserueth to be called a glasse of godlinesse. For whether thou considerest his office, eyther beholdest his life, eyther thinkest vpon the constancie in his confession, or weyest the ende of his life, thou hast both whereat greatly to maruell, and also vvhich thou mayest desire to imitate and follow, if thou wilt be counted a true Christian. Thus much concerning the argument, profite, and vse of this Epistle. Now it remaineth to declare why it is called Generall. The Epistles of the Apostles, of Peter two, of Iohn the first, one of Iude, and this of Iames are called Generall, bicause they were not appoynted and written to certayne cities and persons (as all the Epistles of Paule and the second and third of Iohn were) but were giuen to all the godly indifferently, dispersed in diuers places through the whole world. Some doe call these Epistles Canonically, thereby to put a difference betweene them and the Epistles of Paule, who are in a manifest error. For the Epistles of Paule are no lesse Canonically then the Epistles of Iames, the Epistles of Peter, or of Iohn, bicause that whatsoeuer we read in the Epistles of the Apostles, we ought to embrace it as a canon or rule of the truth.

The author of this Epistle is a glasse of godlinesse & why.

VVhy this Epistle & certayne other in the newe Testament are called Generall.

The

Chap. i.

2

The summe of the fyrst Chapter.

HE exhorteth Christians that they faynte not vnder the beaue burden of tentations, and that by shewing the rewarde of ouercomming tentation. And least any impute the beginning of tentation to God, he teacheth both from whence tentation proceedeth, and also that all good thinges are of God, who hath begotten vs agayne by his word.

The order and partes of the first Chapter.

THe first part of this chapter is an inscription. The second a proposition, wherein he perswadeth Christians not to be ouercome with tentations. In the third because it may sometime be, that some being seduced with errour doe yeelde vnto tentation, he admonisheth that wisdom is to be asked of God by fayth without wauering. In the fourth, least any being discouraged with pouertie and contempt, doe yeeld vnto tentations he exhorteth both rich and poore vnto true humilitie. In the fift is set forth the rewarde of ouercomming tentation, and the beginning thereof is also shewed, that the deceites of it may be the better auoyded. The sixt is an admonition taken of contraries, that God is not the author of tentation, but rather of all goodnesse. which he confirmeth as it were by a testimony of the goodnesse of God, setting forth the benefite of our regeneration. And so this chapter tendeth to one ende and purpose, to wit, that we suffer not our selues to be ouerwhelmed with the heauy burden of tentations. To this ende also serue the rest.

The partes of this chapter are six, which are here in order rehearsed,

B.ii.

The

The exposition of the fyrst chap- ter with an obseruation of the Doctrine.

1 James a seruant of God, and of the Lord Iesus Christ,
to the twelue tribes vvhich are scattered abroade,
salutation.



This inscription conteyneth thre thinges. For first it hath the name of the author of this Epistle, with a description thereof, and also his office. Secondly, the Apostle maketh mention of them to whom he writeth. Lastly he addeth a salutation. The author of the Epistle is James, who by profession was the seruant of God, but by office the seruant of Iesus Christe, that is, an Apostle. He did write to the twelue tribes scattered abroade, and as Peter hath mentioned, dispersed through the world. In histories mention is made of the manifold scattering abroade of the Iewes. For first the ten tribes were dispersed through the kingdome of Babylon, then the two that remained were leade away into Babylonickall captiuitie, and the captiuitie being ended onely the least part of the tribe of Iuda and Benjamin did returne. To these Iewes therefore dwelling here and there, and conuerted to the fayth of Christe, James doth write, and in the beginning salutech them, or as it is in the Greeke, biddeth them reioyce, signifying that the surest way vnto true tope is fayth in Christe. The scattering abroad of the Iewes declareth an exceeding great difference betweene the kingdome of Christ, and the kingdomes of the worlde. The kingdome of Christe is not inclosed or compassed with certaine boundes in this worlde, but it consisteth in a good conscience, in righteousness and tope in the holy Ghost, as Paule saith. In this kingdome are all euen as many as truely beleue in Christ, whether they be nere at hande or far of. Againe this scattering abroade doth

To vvhom
the Apostle
vvriteth this
Epistle,

The kingdom
of Christ, and
the king-
domes of the
worlde doe
greatly differ.

Epistle of S. James.

3

doth admonish vs, that the Church of Christ in this world is not tyed (as the Pope thinketh) to any certaine place or succession, but rather to the word of God, to the sacramentes, and to obedience toward the Gospell.

2 My brethren, count it all ioy, vwhen ye fall into diuers tentations.

The proposition of the first exhortation, to witte, that the beleeuing Jewes be not overcome of tentations. This exhortation is worthely made first vnto them, who being drinen out of their countrie, were oppressed with diuers iniuries of their neighbours. Whereas he saith not simply, be not overcome of tentations, or some such like thing, but count it ail, that is, full ioye, when you fall into diuers tentations: he putteth a difference betweene the effectes of the tentation of the godly and of the vngodly. For as the ende of the tentation of the vngodly is sorrowfulness and desperation: so the ende of the tentation of the godly is ioye and victorie ouer tentation. When he sayth diuers, he signifieth that the beleuers are not tried with one kinde of tentation, but with many and diuers, wherefore it becommeth Christians to watch, least that they being compassed about with diuersitie of tentations, doe fall into the handes of the aduersarie.

The ends of the tentation of the godlye and of the vngodly are diuers.

3 Knowving that the trying of your sayth bringeth forth patience.

A reason of the proposition taken of the effectes of the tentations of the godly. For first tentation is, as it were a touchstone, whereby the faith of Christians is tryed, we haue an example in Abraham. For they whose faith is not true, in the time of tentation doe depart, according to the parable in the Gospell, *Matth. 15*. Contrariwise they, whose faith is firme and sure, are made stronger throughe tentations, for they are vphelde by the spirite of God. Moreover, sayth being tryed worketh patience, that is, maketh that we doe patiently suffer affliction, for hope of

The effectes of the tentation of the godly.

B.iii.

our

A Commentarie vpon the

our deliuerance: Whereupon Paule saith, that experience bringeth forth hope, and hope maketh not ashamed, that is, faileth vs not, that at the length we shoulde be ashamed in the sight of the sonne of God.

4 And let patience haue her perfect vvorke.

We must
continue con-
stant vnto the
ende.
Marth. 10.22.

This is an exhortation to perseuerance in suffering, for the Apostle will haue the godly to continue constant in patience euen vnto the ende, bicause he is blessed that induceth to the ende. The word patience in this place signifieth constancie and perseuerance in patience. The effecte therefore of patience is constant perseuerance.

That ye may be perfect and entire lacking nothing.

The finall ef-
fect of the
crosse of the
godly.

The ende and effect of the affliction of the godly is here declared, which is the perfecting of vs in Christ. For all our life time we ought to endeavour to come vnto this perfection, which is dayly polished and fined with affliction as with the instrument of God, vntill suche time as it be fully finished. This place doth admonish vs to speake some what of Christian perfection, which James defineth here to be entirenes. But bicause the Papists doe but trifle and dally concerning Christian perfection, it is expedient rightly to instruct the godly, that they may know what they ought to thinke concerning the same. We must vnderstand therefore, that there is a double perfection commended to vs in the Scripture, whereof the one is absolute, and is an imputation of the perfect righteousness and obedience of our Lorde Iesus Christe. For as Christ by his obedience on the Crosse doth make a full satisfaction for sinnes: so his obedience to the law imputeth righteousness, so that euerie one that beleueth, may appeare perfect and righteous in the sighte of God through the perfection and righteousness of Christ. We hauing confidence in this perfection, doe looke for the glory of immortalitie. An other perfectiō there is in the regenerate

Two kinds of
perfection
mentioned in
the scripture.

Epistle of S. James.

4

nerate which the word of God commendeth to all the gods:
Ipe: walke before me (saith the Lorde vnto our father A. Gen. 17. 1.
brahim) and be thou perfect. Christ saith: ye shall there-
fore be perfect, as your father which is in heauen is per- Matth. 5. 48.
fect. There is no doubt, thou wilt say, concerning the com-
maundement, but it is demaunded wherin that perfection
doth consist. We must vnderstand that Paule Philip. 3.
bleth the word of perfection after two sortes. For he sayth
thus: Not as though I had already attained to it, neyther
were alre dy perfect: but I follow if I may comprehend that Philip. 3. 12.
for whose sake also I am comprehended of Christ Iesus. 13. 4. 5.
Brethren I count not my selfe that I haue attained to it, but
one thing I doe: I forget that which is behind, and endeuor
my selfe vnto that which is before, and follow hard towarde
the marke, for the price of the bie calling of God in Christe
Iesus. Let vs therefore as many as be perfect, be thus min-
ded. In these wordes of Paule there is a most manifest
contradiction, vnlesse we will admitte, that there be more
kindes of perfection then one. First he saith that he is not
perfecte, afterwarde hee numbretch him selfe among them
that be perfect. There is therefore a double vse of this
worde, for sometime one is sayd to be perfect in substance,
as we say that a childe is a perfect man, that is in sub-
stance. Sometime one is said to be perfect in quantitie
or degrees, as when we say: no man hath perfect obedi-
ence according to the lawe of God. After the first maner
Abraham, Dauid, Paule, the theeke on the crosse, &c.
were perfect. According to the latter maner no man in
this life hath bin found perfect, beside Christ Iesus alone,
but that perfection we shal obtaine in the lyfe euerlasting,
where we shall be made like vnto Christe. But that the
state of grace in this life is perfection after a sorte, it may
be taught partly by descriptions, partly by examples. Of
the wordes of Paule which I haue rehearsed, this defini-
tion may be gathered, that Christian perfection is to for-

Definitions of
christian per-
fection taken
out of the
wordes of
Paule.

B. iiii.

sake

A Commentarie vpon the

Who may be
sayd to be
perfect accord-
ing to the
vse of the
Scriptures.

A liuely ex-
ample of chri-
stian perfecti-
on.

Gen. 22. 2. 3.
4. 6. 9.

The com-
mandement
of God to A-
braham.

The obedi-
ence of Abra-
ham to vvarde
God.

take sinne, to rest vpon Christ by fayth, and to please to-
ward the marke for the price of the hie calling of God in
Christ Iesus. As Paul defineth it in the Epistle to
Timothe: Christian perfection is to fight a good fight, to
haue faith and a good conscience. Whosoever therefore
forsaketh sinne, renounceth lewd and wycked desires, com-
forteth himselfe with confidence & trust in the mediatur,
and endeouureth to approue his whole lyfe before God,
þ his conscience be not defiled: according to the vse of the
Scripture he is called perfect, and that in substance, not
in degrees. For Christ onely was perfect both in sub-
stance and in degrees. But this may more euidently be
perceiued by examples. It was sayd vnto Abraham Ge-
nes. 17. walke before me and be thou perfect. How Abra-
ham obeyed this precept, and how he walked before God
and was perfect, it is playnely declared Genes. 22. by the
commaundement of God, and the obedience of Abraham.
But that this may be the better vnderstande, let vs annex
the wordes of Moses: Behold therefore, saith the Lord to
Abraham, take now thine onely sonne Isaac whom thou lo-
uest, and gette thee vnto the land of Moriah, and offer him
there for a burnt offering vpon one of the mountains, which I
will shew thee. Here thou hast the precept, the obedience
followeth. Then Abraham rose vp early in the morning,
and saddled his Asse, and tooke two of his seruants with him,
and Isaac his sonne, and cloue wood for the burnt offering,
and rose vp and went to the place which God had tolde him.
And a little after: Then Abraham tooke the wood of the
burnt offering, and layde it vpon Isaac. And afterwarde it
followeth: And he bound Isaac his sonne, and layd him, on
the altar vpon the wood, and Abraham stretching forth his
hand, tooke the knife to kill his sonne. By this example of
Abraham it plainely appeareth, what that perfection is,
which the Lord requireth of his seruants in this life, God
commaunded that Abraham, who was iustified before by
fayth

Epistle of S. James. 5

faith, should kill his sonne. Abraham had nothing more deare vnto him then this his sonne, nothing more sweete and pleasant. For he was the onely comfort of life to the olde man Abraham, and to the most holy matron Sara. What doth Abraham here? He beholdeth and considereth two things, God commanding, and his sonne, then whom nothing was more deare vnto him in this life. But he preferreth the commaundement of God before the life of his sonne. Whereupon therfore I conclude, that the perfection of the Saintes in this life is, by faith so to obey God, that they preferre obedience towarde God before all worldlie thinges, whatsoeuer. They which are so affected, are by good right counted perfect. But they which at the commaundement of God will not kill so much as one of their affections, how can they boast of this perfection? Let vs propound an other example out of the newe Testament. Christ Matth. 19. saith to the yong man of whom he was asked concerning the obtaining of eternall life: If thou wilt be perfect, go, sel that thou hast and giue it to the poore, and thou shalt haue treasure in heauen, and come and follow me. Christ knew that this rich yong man was to muche addicted to riches, and that he could not easily turne his minde from them. That therfore this yong man may vnderstand how farre he is of from the true perfection of obedience toward the lawe, the Lord biddeth him forlake his riches and follow him. The Lord seemeth here to make two partes of perfection, to wit, to leaue and forlake riches, and to follow Christ. But we must know that as it was a personall precept, in the which Abraham was commaunded to kill his sonne: so is this personall which is here giuen to this yong man. Wherefore neither of them particularly is to be transferred to the generall definition of perfection, but generally onely, otherwise neither Noe, neyther Dauid, nor Paule had bine perfect. Wherefore we will applye these examples to the generall definition

C. i.

after

VWhat vve must doe if vve vwill be counted perfect in this life.

Another example vvhich by perfection and the partes thereof may be perceived. Matth. 19. 21.

5
12 13

A Commentarie vpon the

Who is sayde
to be perfect
and who to
be vnperfect.

after this manner: As Abraham, bicause by fayth he preferred obedience toward God before the life of his moste deare and onely sonne, is sayd to be perfect, and the yong man following Christ, if he had preferred pouertie and liberalitie toward the poore before his riches, had bine perfect according to the sentence of Christe: so euerye one which by a true faith preferreth obedience toward God, before all thinges of this world, is sayde in the Scripture to be perfect. And on the contrarie. They which preferre worldly thinges, their owne affections, honour, glorie, pleasures, and diuers other deceits, before obedience toward God, are vnperfect, yea, they doe but in vaine glorie of the name of Christians. These thinges agree with those which we haue before mentioned out of Paule, of which also we gather this definition of Christian perfection:

The definiti-
on of christi-
an perfection.

Two parts of
christian per-
fection.

Christian perfection is, imperfection being acknowledged, to preferre obedience toward God by fayth in Christ before all worldly thinges, and to make good and allowable the whole lyfe before God. Of this christian perfection, Christ maketh two partes, to wit: to followe him, which is done by true conuersion: and to preferre obedience toward him, before those thinges which are euen most deare vnto vs. And hitherto of christian perfection concerning the substance. But we shall then be perfect in degrees when the sonne of God shall appeare, to whome we shall be like, bicause we shall see him as he is, and euery one that hath his hope reposed in him, doth purifie himselfe, euen as he is pure.

5 If any of you lacke vvisedom, let him aske of God, vvhich giueth to all men liberally, and reprocheth no man, and it shall be giuen him.

To what ende
vvisedome is
to be asked of
God.

Least that any man pretende ignoraunce, whereby he endureth not tentation, the Apostle biddeth that he which hath not vvisedome, doe aske it of God, and that vnto this ende, that he may not onely vnderstande howe to behaue himselfe

Epistle of S. James. 6

himselfe in tentations, least that being pressed downe with the heauie burden of them, he doe faint and be overcome: but also that he may knowe for what ende and purpose God suffreth his to be tried with affliction, least that he be depriued of the fruite thereof. God (saith he) giueth liberally, for he seeketh not any recompence, but onely is liberall of his mere goodnesse and bounteousnesse, and doth not after the maner of men, vpbayde any with the benefites whiche he hath bountifullly bestowed, so as hee continew thankfull. If thou demaund what wisdom that is, by which we are taught and instructed to beare tentations patiently: I aunswere that it consisteth in knowledge and sense of feeling, knowledge is to vnderstand by the word of God that in all tentation and affliction both the iudgement and mercie of God are to be considered. The iudgement is, that we vnderstand that we are tempted and oppressed with diuers afflictions bicause of our sinnes. *Thou dost chasten man, saith the psalmist, rebuking him for sinne.* Mercy is that we may know that it is the will of God, that we should be vexed with tentations and afflictions, that we may repent vs of our sinnes, and not perish with the wicked world. For the Apostle speaketh thus, *1. Cor. 11. When we are iudged, we are chastened of the Lord, bicause we shoulde not be condemned with the worlde.* The sense of feeling of wisdom, is to feele comfort and consolation in the minde, throughe the holpe Ghoste, who supporteth vs in affliction, that we fall not, and vpholdeth vs with hope of our deliuerance to come, as we see in Job, who when he was oppressed with affliction, did comforte himselfe with this trust and confidence: *I am sure that my redemer liueth, and that I shall rise out of the earth in the latter day.* Hereupon Paule writeth to Timothe: *Remember that Iesus Christ was raised againe from the dead.*

6 But let him aske in fayth, and vvauer not.

He prescribeth howe wisdom is to be asked of God, to

C.ii.

wit,

VVisedome that teacheth to be patient in affliction consisteth in two poyntes. The first poynt

Howe the iudgement of God is to be considered in afflictions. Psalm. 39. 11.

VVhat we must know concerning the mercy of God in affliction.

The second point of wisdom in affliction.

Job. 13. 25.

2. Tim. 2. 8.

A Commentarie vpon the

God the foun-
taine of vwise-
dome and all
goodnesse.

 How al good
things are to
be obtayned
at the handes
of God.

 A vaine thing
to seeke after
more media-
tours.

 wit, in faith without wauering. This place conteineth many poyntes of doctrine: for first it teacheth that God is the fountaine of all wisdom, yea and of all goodnesse. Secondly, it sheweth that he is liberall to communicate of the fountaine of his goodnesse to them that doe aske. Also it declareth that prayer proceeding from faith, is the ordinarie meane by whiche we may obtaine and receiue good thinges at the hand of God. Agayne, it giueth to vnderstand that in prayer is required faith, which resteth vpon the goodnesse of the mediator. Furthermore of this place is gathered, that all doubting is farre to be removed from prayer: for he which doubteth or wauereth when he prayeth, doth onely poure out wordes vnprofitably, and prayeth not effectually, whereupon this also followeth, that if we must not wauer nor dout in prayer, it is but in vayne to make more mediators. For they which seeke after more mediators, doe thinke that they are not heard for the one and onely mediator Christ. Moreover with this saying of Iames disagreeeth the opinion of the Papists, who goe about to make faith and doubting to agree together. To these may be added that all thinges that pertaine to the saluation of our soules, are to be asked without any condition. Finally, the opinion of the Stoicks is here confuted, concerning the necessitie of the falling out of thinges: for as wisdom is here promised to him that asketh it by faith, so the wisdom wherof mention is here made, is not giuen to him that doth not aske it.

For he that vvauereth, is like a vvaue of the sea, tost of the vvinde, and caried avway.

7 Neither let that man thinke that he shall receyue any thing of the Lorde.

Our faith must
not vvauer in
prayer and
vvhy.

 This is a reason, why in prayer he requireth fayth without wauering: for he which wauereth, saythe he, is compared to a waue of the sea, that is, he is vnconstant. For as the waue of the sea is driuen sometime into this coast,

Epistle of S. James.

7

coast, sometime into that, according as the winde and the raging of the sea is: so a man doutting now thinketh this thing, shortly after his minde being changed, he thinketh an other thing, even as he is driven on with erroneous doctrine and blinde affections. Such a man praieth in wayne, because he is destitute of true faith. These things ought to admonish vs of constancie, both in doctrine and also in godly exercises. But perhaps some man will object and saye: there is doutting in euerie man therefore there is a firme and constant sayth without wauering in no man. I aunswere that according to diuers principles both may be, both stedfast faith and doubting. For if thou doest respect the spirite in the regenerate, sayth is a firme consent nothing wauering: But if thou lokest vnto the flesh, doubts do oftentimes arise, which are the workes of y^e flesh, agaynst which the workes of the spirit do strue. We haue an exāple of eyther of these in Abraham. Ro. 4.

An obiection.

The aunswer.

Both faith & wauering are in the regenerate in diuers respects

8 A double minded man is vnstable in all his vvayes. He is here sayde to be a double minded man, which doubteth of the doctrine or wyll of God, such a one because he is vnconstant in all his doinges, therefore hath he no stablenesse, or constancie in his prayer. Let vs therefore in this place note that the foundation of all godly actions, pea and of that most excellent worke of prayer, is constancie in the doctrine concerning the will of God, & in sayth.

VWho is double minded,

The foundation of all godly doings.

9 Let the brother of lovv degree reioyce in that he is exalted:

10 Againe, he that is rich, in that he is made lovv: for as the floure of the grasse, shall he vanish away.

Because both pouertie by which all kinde of calamitie as by a particular or an example, is signified, and also riches, by the name whereof all prosperous succes in this lyfe is vnderstande, may minister matter of tentation: he doth very conveniently preuent an obiection, and teacheth both, that is, the poore man and also the rich. He teacheth the

The poore mans lesson.

C.iii.

poore

A Commentarie vpon the

The rich
mans leſſon.

2. Cor. 10. 17.
An obiection.

The answer.

The glorie of
riches ſitlye
compared to
the floure that
ſoone fadeth
away.

poore man not to faſten his eyes vpon the calamitie of this preſent life, but rather to conſider that he is exalted, where- by hereafter he being made the ſon of God, ſhall be aduanced vnto the glory of immortality. He teacheth the rich mā to thinke with himſelfe how fragile and deceitfull the riches of this world are, which as they do not make him bleſſed that poſſelleth them, ſo doe they ſone vaniſh away euen as the floure of the herbe. What doth not Paul ſay, *Let him that reioyceth, reioyce in the Lorde?* Wherefore the doth Iames bid him that is poore & of low degree, reioyce in that he is exalted, and him that is rich, in that he is made low.

The Apoſtles doe nothing diſagree the one with the other. For both of them doe place the foundation of true reioycing in the Lord. Wherefore theſe exceptions are to be held: firſt what good thing ſoeuer we haue, let vs acknowledge that we haue receiued it of God, attributing nothing to our ſelues. Secondly let vs holde faſt this foundation that we truſt to be ſaued through the onely mercy of God. Finally let vs reſt in the onely author of all goodneſſe: with theſe exceptions we may reioyce and that godly in euery kinde of thing that is good.

11 For as vwhen the ſunne riſeth vvith heate, then the graſſe vvithereth, and his floure falleth avway, and the goodly ſhape of it periſheth: euen ſo ſhall the rich man vvither avway in all his vvayes.

He amplifieth the compariſon wherein he compareth the glory of riches to the fading floure, which when the heate of the Sunne increaſeth, is wythered, falleth away and periſheth. As therefore it is a fooliſh thing to reioyce in bayne riches: ſo the godly man ſhould do prepoſterouſly, if he being diſcouraged with the grieuouſneſſe of his po- uertie, ſhoulde be overcome of temptation.

12 Bleſſed is the mā that endureth temptation: for vvhe he is tried, he ſhall receiue the crowne of life, vvwhich the Lord hath promiſed to them that loue him.

Before

Epistle of S. James. 8

Before he willed that christians doe reioyce when they shall fall into diuers tentations, now hauing confuted those thinges, that seemed to be agaynst his purpose, hee rendreth a reason of his exhortation. The argument is concluded after this sort: Blessed is the man that endureth tentation, that is which fainteth not vnder the burden of tentation: therefore the godly oughte with good cause to reioyce, when they fall into diuers tentations. The antecedent he proueth by the ende of tentation being overcome after this maner: when he that is tempted, is tried, he shall receiue a crowne of life, therefore he may well be called blessed. The antecedent is grounded vpon the promises of God, vvhich crowne, sayth he, God hath promised to them that loue him. This place y Papists abuse to confirme their opinion concerning merites of workes. But the very circumstance of the place confuteth them. For the Apostle dealeth here with them that are conuerted, who being iustified before by fayth, do go thorow diuers tentations to the hauen of blessednesse: Agayne, it is one thing to speake of the cause of saluation, and another thing to speake of the way, by which we must come vnto saluation which is free. Neyther is the crowne of life a rewarde due to our fighte, but a free recompence of our labour. For we doe not deserue a crowne by fighting, but the father giueth it vnto his childe of his mere goodnesse, who considereth not so much what the childe doe deserue, as what he hath promised them of his fatherly loue. Furthermore, if any man object: the crowne of life is promised to them that loue, therefore loue is a merit or desert of the crowne: We must aunswere that there is committed a fallacion of that which is not the cause as of the cause. For the antecedent doth not containe the cause of the crowne, but the qualitie or maner of crowning. And because there be two principles of things, one that the thinges be, the other that they maye be

C.iiii.

knowne

The reason why the godly ought to reioyce in tentations.

The blessed ende of the tentations of the godly.

The Papistes abuse of this place, and the confutation thereof.

An obiection.

The aunswer.

A Commentarie vpon the

The very
principles
vvhcreby vve
are iustified
and saued.

The meanes
vvhcreby vve
are knowne
to be righte-
ous & saued.

Matth. 25. 35.
36.

knowne what they be, we must vnderstand y^e concerning God, his mere good will and pleasure, and the redemption which his sonne hath wrought, and sayth concerning our selues are the very principles, which doe iustifie and saue vs. But if thou considerest the knowledge of righteousness and saluation, the principles thereof are rightly sayd to be patience vnder the Crosse, loue, mercy towards the poore, and other vertues. For these doe make that thou maiest be knowne to be righteous, and saued. Whereupon the Lord sayth: *I was an hungred and ye gaue me meate, I was naked and ye clothed me.* By these fruites of sayth the angels of God and men shall iudge the tree in the last day, and thereby shall account the righteousness and saluation of the elect. But here of more in the second chapter, where shall be entreated of a liuely and of a dead sayth.

13 Let no man say, vvhcn he is tempted: I am tempted of God: for God can not be tempted vwith euill, neither tempteth he any man.

God is not
the author of
temptation, or
offiame.

He being about to entreate of the causes of temptation, first taketh away the error of them which thought God to be the author of temptation, and forbiddeth that any man, when he is tempted (that is, when he is prouoked to doe euill) say that he is tempted of the Lord. For God will not haue sinne, therefore he prouoketh not to sinne, neither is delighted with the perdition of men. Wherefore as God himselfe is voyde of temptation: so doth he tempt no man, that is, he doth not moue him forwarde to sinne. This place doth plainly make agaynst those that make God the author of sinne.

14 But euery man is tempted vvhcn he is dravne away by his ovvne concupiscence, and is entised.

From vvhence
temptation pro-
ceedeth, and
the maner
howe.

He sheweth the cause and fountayne of temptation, that is, of prouoking to doe euill. This fountayne or spring he maketh to be euery mans own concupiscence, to the which he attributeth a double effect. For the first, it withholdeth the

Epistle of S. James.

9

the cogitation of man from that which is good. Secondly, it entileth the affection of man, and ouerwhelmeth him vnwares. We must therfore strue agaynst the first motions, least that being entiled by our concupiscence, we fall into sinne.

Of tentation, and the remedie agaynst it.

TEntation is a driuing forward or perswading of a mā to enterprise some thing, that is, either to commit, or to omit. Hereof there are dyuers sorts, whych take their differences of their endes. For there is one tentation of seducing or beguyling, there is another of presumption, another of triall. Of these thre I wyl speake in order, and shewe the remedies agaynst euery of them. Tentation of seducing, is that, the ende whereof is seducing or beguiling. By this man is prouoked to enterpryse something agaynst the law of God, whereby he being deceiued, is miserably excluded out of the familie of God, falleth from grace, and becommeth guiltye of eternall death, vntyll such tyme as he repent. For fayth can not abide and remaine, when man giueth place to such tentation, and knowing and willing doth disobediently despise the commaundement of God. This tentation of seducing is of two sortes if thou considerest the causes thereof. For it is eyther outward or inwarde. I call that inward, whose beginning and cause is in man himselfe, to wit, euell concupiscence: which fighteth together with a domesticall tyranne, that is originall sinne: and driueth a man to offend, that by this meanes the olde man, that is, originall sinne may obtaine the rule in man. But concupiscence in euery man is of two sortes, one naturall, an other of the flesh. Naturall concupiscence is that, by which we do naturally desire those thinges, which by the right iudgement of reason we iudge eyther honest, eyther profitable, eyther pleasant. This by it selfe is the worke of God in man, and

D.i.

by

What tentation is.

Three Kindes of tentation.

Tentation of seducing what it is.

Two Kindes of tentation of seducing.

Inward tentation of seducing.

Naturall concupiscence what it is and how farre to be approued.

A Commentarie vpon the

Concupiscence of the flesh, and the description thereof.

The plentiful frutes of fleshly concupiscence.

Fleshly concupiscence the roote of all mischief.

By what meanes concupiscence of the flesh may be overcome.

by no meanes to be condemned, as long as it keepeth it selfe within it owne boundes, that is, whiles it desireth those thinges that are shewed by the right iudgement of reason, to wit, those thinges whiche are in very deede honest, profitable and pleasant, by which nature is not defiled but preserved. Concupiscence of the flesh is, when by the corruption of the flesh we desire those thinges, whiche please the flesh and displease God, as when we couet after any thing, which is forbidden vs by the law of God. This of Plato is worthely called a beast with many heads, of which it is spoken prouerbially, Concupiscence is the first beginning of all euells. For it is a most fruitefull mother of pernicious children: to this Marcus the Heremite did attribute selfe loue. Of this do spring surfetting and drunkenesse, couetousnesse, thirst after vayne glorie. Of this surfetting come vnlawfull lustes and all kindes of pernicious pleasures. Of couetousnesse cometh fraud, guile, insurpe, lying, violence, manslaughter. Of thirst after vayne glory springeth pride, wicked ambition, diuers ill practises, byiesly contempt of God and of our neighbour. Thou seest what a fruitefull mother of all vices the concupiscence of the flesh is, which one hath called, and not vnworthely, the fountayne of all euil, inasmuch as it is not onely the euident cause of all iniquitie and hatred of God, but also it calleth men from that which is good and honest. For when men doe study vpon heauenly thinges, and meditate vpon diuine matters, this cometh, and with entisements as with certayne cordes draweth them backe. Wherefore James doth not without good cause affirme, that men are entised by their owne concupiscence. But how shal we ouercome the concupiscence of the flesh? This beast is to be bounde with singular art and cunning, and to be mortified: but it is bound, not by mans strength, but by a diuine power, that is, by the spirite of fayth, which in the man that is regenerate doth ingender a cer-

Epistle of S. James.

10

A certayne newe concupiscence, which is called the concupiscence of the spirite. This, when it is first conceived by the spirite of sayth, setteth it selfe agaynst the concupiscence of the flesh, whereupon there riseth in all the godly a very sore conflict betwene the flesh and the spirite. Hereupon is that which Paule sayth: *The flesh lusteth agaynst the spirite, and the spirite agaynst the flesh.* But from whence is that concupiscence of the spirite? It proceedeth from the vertue of the death, buriall, and resurrection of the Lord, which in time past was represented in the olde sacrifices which were first bound and then kyled, but all the whole vertue is in the Crosse of Christ. Therefore to bynde the concupiscence of the flesh, is to fasten it to the crosse of Christ, that in it it may be mortified, that it be not effectuell to worke. Wherefore this beast is then bound, when thou doest not those thinges which it commaundeth, it is wholly mortified, when the force thereof is not felt, which commeth not to passe before we haue changed this lyfe with death, which is a passage to the true lyfe. To the bynding and mortifying of this beast, all the exercises of godlinesse must be referred, as prayer, reading meditation, sobrietie, diligence in our dutye, flying of euell occasions, thinking on the prouidence of God, consideration of the euell of concupiscence, the gloriouse end of victorie, the shame and dishonestie that accompanieth them, whiche submytte them selues to this beast. Thus much brievely concerning the inward tentation of seducing or beguiling, and of the remedy agaynst it. The outwarde tentation of beguiling, is whose beginning and cause is without a man, and this may be distinguished according to the diuersitie of the causes. Wherefore, seeing that sometime the worlde, sometime the deuell, sometime the thinges that are about vs are the causes thereof, it commeth to passe that there be three differences of this outward tentation. The worlde therefore tempteth when it prouoketh to

The flesh in the godly fighteth agaynst the spirite. Gal. 5. 17.

Concupiscence of the spirite from whence it commeth.

Meanes to bynde and mortifie fleshly concupiscence.

The outwarde tentation of seducing, which is of three sortes according to the causes thereof, which are the worlde, the deuell, the thinges that are about vs.

VVhen and howe the worlde tempteth vs.

D. ii.

finne

A Commentarie vpon the

sinne by it vanitie and wickednesse. Many are ouercome by this kind of tentation. For when they beholde the most corrupt maners of men, and see them also unpunished, many are allured by this example. Whereupon it is sayde that an euill custome is the nourishing of euil. Agaynst this kinde of tentation we must sette the glory of the kingdome of Christ, wherewith the vanitie of the worlde being compared is as a smoke sone vanishing away. Secondly let vs think vpon the shortnes of mans life, which although it maye be filled with the vanitie of the worlde, yet those continuall delightes in the kingdome of God are by infinite degrees to be preferred before it. Also let vs consider how Christ the Lord, and many of the sayntes of God despised the vanitie and wickednes of the worlde, looking vnto the price that is set before them that runne lawfully.

Remedies against the tentation of the world.

To what ende the deuell tempteth vs.

The engines of the deuell which he vseth in tempting the godly.

Examples of such as were led with the tentations of the deuell.

The deuill tempteth men after diuers sortes, and that vnto this ende, that he may hinder them from being gathered together into the folde of Christ, or that, when they are gathered together, he may cast them out agayne, that they should not be saued. For there is nothing more pleasant vnto him than the destruction of all men. And for this cause he vseth especially thre engines to inuade the folde of Christ. For epyther he corrupteth the doctrine, or raiseth vp offences, or else giueth occasions of infinite mischieses, that I may in the meane season say nothing of his hypocrisie, tyrannie, and craftinesse, which he continually vseth to assaile the Church of Christ. He entreth into the heart of man, and with speede taketh out the worde of God from thence, that a secure contempt of God maye follow, as in Balaam: or hatred and wrath agaynst God, as in Saul: or a furious defending of a wicked opinion, as in the Papistes. Such were the tentations of Cain, Saul, Iudas, Samosatenus, Arius, and in our time of Seruetus, and of very manye other, and at this time

Epistle of S. James.

II

time Satan doth rage much more, than euer he did at any other. For he knoweth that the end of his furie is at hand, and that the sonne of God will shortly come, who shall iudge him with all his members to euerlasting torments.

Why Satan rageth more now then heretofore.

What remedie is here? the aduersarie is mightie, the companie of his warriours is great, we haue neede therefore of a most strong defence. What I pray you is that?

This is the victorie, sayeth John, that ouercommeth the worlde, euen our fayth. And Salomon sayth: the name of

1. Iohn. 5. 4. Prcu. 18. 10.

the Lorde is a strong tower, the righteous runneth vnto it, and is in safegarde. For seeing there is no other waye to

How the tentations of Satan maye be resisted and ouercome.

ouercome this tentation of the deuell, then a liuely sayth in Christ the conquerour of Satan, & this liuely sayth may be kindled with earnest prayer, let vs with exceeding care and studie kepe & puritie of doctrine, wheron sayth dependeth.

Also agaynst offences and other practises of Satan, let vs fortifie and strengthen our selues with the examples of the Saintes, and encourage our selues with the hope of our deliuerance, which shall be through Iesus Christ, whom we looke for to come shortly to iudge the quick and the deade. More defences agaynst the assaultes of Satan, Paule numbryeth by Eph. 6. which ought from thence to be taken.

The things that are about vs, doe aboue measure also tempt vs. Before vs death, the iudgement of God, hell. Behinde vs our sinnes that are past, many things committed and omitted. On our right hande, power, riches, honour. On our left hand perils, persecutions, offences, the most sorrowfull state of the Church of God outwardly in this world. These euils Iesus Christ onely doth remedie, whiles he is possessed by fayth. For if thou beholdest those thinges that are before vs, he hath ouercome death with life, he hath satisfied the iudgement of God, paying the ransome for our sinnes, he hath spoiled hell. If thou lookest vnto those thinges that are behind vs,

Tentation that commeth of the thinges that are about vs.

Remedies prescribed.

D.iii.

it

A Commentarie vpon the

it is he onely, which maketh a full satisfaction for finnes. If thou settest the treasures of all good things in him, the power, riches, and honour of the worlde shall not easilye drawe thee from Christ, neither shalt thou giue ouer being discouraged with any euils, so as thou possessest him by a liuely fayth, and desirest his helpe agaynst all things that doe annoy or hurt thee.

The seconde kinde of tentation which is of presumption.

Remedies against the tentation of presumption.

Tentation of presumption is, when a man is prouoked to tempt God by abusing his long sufferance, iustice, mercie, liberalitie, and many other benefites. This tentation truly is dangerous, for if any man be overcome of it, he sinneth more freely and boldly, because he determineth with himselfe that God is good and mercifull, and slowe to anger, as the Psalmes sayth. This tentation these things doe chiefly remedie: first, a thinking on the shortnesse of lyfe: secondly, a consideration of tragicall and lamentable examples. For many sinning securely, haue bene suddenly preuented by the wrath of God, and taken from hence without repentance: thirdly, the very vnworthynesse it selfe. For what is a more vnworthie thing, than for the chylde to despise the father, because he is good to him and mercifull towarde him. Let euery one therefore walke carefully in the sight of the Lorde, and knowe that it is a deuellishe furie and madnesse, to sinne aduisedlye and of a sette purpose, or to deferre repentance, because God is sayde to be long suffering, gentle, and mercifull. For he is sayde also to be a iust Iudge, which is angrie with finnes, and is determined seuerelye to punish the vnrepentant.

The thirde kinde of tentation, which is of triall.

Abraham tried with tentation.

Tentation of triall is, whereby the fayth of man toward God is tried, to wit, eyther when any worke is committed to a man heauie and grievous to the flesh, or any affliction cometh to him from God for his trials sake, or when any heresie agaynst the articles of our fayth is suffered to arise, Abraham receiuech a commaundement from
God,

God, wherein he is commaunded to kill for a burnt offering his sonne Isaac, his onely heire, which Sara a free and noble matron brought forth vnto him. This commaundement without all doubt was heauie and grievous to the flesh: but what doth Abraham here? He preferreth obedience toward God before this his most tender sonne, then whom nothing was more precious vnto him in this world, and prepareth himselfe to execute the commaundement of God, Genes. 22. Job is oppressed with affliction in his body, and with many other miseries, but in patience he preferreth obedience toward God before his owne life and all other thinges whatsoever. *I am sure, sayth he,* that my redeemer liueth, & that I shall rise out of the earth in the latter day. Also, shall we receiue good at the hands of God, and not receiue euil? The primitive Church was tempted with many and diuers heresies, as we are at this day, but as they did, so let vs let the fountaine of our sauiour agaynst all the cisterns of Heretikes full of deuillish stinck and filthines. Of this kinde of temptation Moses speaketh, Deut. 13. The Lorde your God proueth you, to knowe whether ye loue the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soule. Agaynst this kind of temptation let vs strengthen our selues with two thinges: with holding fast the puritie of the Gospell, and with constant obedience toward God both in prosperitie and also in aduersitie,

15. Then vwhen lust hath conceiued, it bringeth forth sinne, and sinne vwhen it is finished bringeth forth death.

In the former verse the Apostle compareth concupiscence to a bayt, wherewith the fisher couereth his hooke, that he may deceiue and catch the fishes: here he compareth the same to a woman that bringeth forth children, that he may thereby signifie that it is the mother and fountayne of all sinnes, yea and of all euil. Concupiscence is then sayd to

D.iiii.

haue

Job tried with tentation.

Job. 19. 25.

Job. 2. 10.

The primitive Church tried with temptation.

How we must behaue our selues in temptation of trial.

5
2 13

A Commentarie vpon the

When concupiscence conceyueth.

Originall sin.

Actuall sinne.

We must in no wise think that God tempteth any man to doe euill.

haue conceiued, when it possesseth the affection and will, which when it is done, forthwith it bringeth forth actuall sinne, whereof as it were a certayne issue commeth death and damnation. Here therefore is mention made of two kindes of sinne, to wit, originall and actuall. Originall sinne is signified by the name of concupiscence, the proper and next effect thereof. This, although by it selfe and of it owne nature it is a mortall sinne, yet in the regenerate it is pardoned, so that it bringeth not death, except first it begin to reigne through the euil desires thereof. Whereupon Paule Rom. 6. sayth: *Let not sinne reigne therefore in your mortall body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof.* Actual sinne is, when we doe voluntarily submit our selues to concupiscence to obey it, and suffer it to haue the whole rule in vs.

16 Erre not my deare brethren.

Bicause that many had perswaded themselves, that men are tempted of God to doe that which is euil: he doth againe admonish and exhort them, that they suffer not themselves to be entangled with this error, signifying that many absurd thinges and unworthy of God doe follow this opinion. But that they may more attentiuely and gently here the most strong reason thereof, he doth as it were prepare them, by calling them by the name of brethren, and by a signification of his loue, wherewith he embraceth them. For we doe more willingly heare them, whose goodwill we perceiue toward vs, when as contrariwise we feare the deceites of them, whose minds we vnderstand to be estranged from vs.

17 Euerie good giuing and euery perfect gift is from aboue, and commeth downe from the Father of lights, vwith vvhome is no variablenes, neyther shadow of turning.

18 Of his owne vwill begat he vs vwith the vword of truth, that vve should be as the first fruites of his creatures.

creatures.

This is a most strong reason, wherein the Apostle doth confute the errour of them, which did contend that God doth tempt men to doe euell, yea and that he is the author of sinne. But that the partes of this reason may be the better perceiued, and the benefits of God toward vs may be more manifestly acknowledged, I will make a resolution of the wordes, and will diuide them into six partes, in euery of which I will bring in the proposition of the Apostle, that it may be vnderstand of what great force this reason is to confute the errour of the aduersaries. Ifirst therefore he saith: Euery good giuing and euery perfect gift, (that is, nothing at all counterfait) is frō aboue. By which saying he signifieth that solliciting or mouing to doe euell is in no wise from aboue, for how should it agree that good thinges and euell shoulde flowe out of the same fountayne? But if any man doe except that the euell of punishment is from aboue, let him againe knowe, that the cause, that is, the euell of offence is in man, which God being iust doth iustly punish. Wherefore if thou considerest the iustice of God, the punishment is not to be called euell but good.

Secondly he sayth: Comming dovvne from the Father of lightes. As Father here signifieth the author and fountayne: so by the word lightes is ment all good thinges, euen as by the word darkenelle calamities of euerye sorte are to be vnderstand. Whereof is made this reason: God is the father of lightes, that is, the author of all good thinges, therefore he is not the author of darknesse, that temptation to euell should be attributed to him. Let this re- stification of the prayse of God be marked, which belon- geth onely vnto him, to wit, that he is the fountayne and author of all good thinges, which ought to admonish vs of prayer wherein we maye aske those thinges which are

E.i.

good

Six reasons follow in order, which do most firmly prouue that God doth in no case tempt any to doe euell.

The first reason.

The second reason.

5
2 13

A Commentarie vpon the

The thirde
reason.

good of him who is the fountayne of all goodnes. We ought hereby also to be admonished of thankfulness, that we may shewe our selues thankfull towards him. Thirdly he addeth: vwith vvhom is no variablenesse. These wordes seeme to be a preuenting of an obiection. For least anye man should saye that he is the authour both of good thinges and of euell, he setteth against that his constancie, whereby he is immutable in his doings. Seing therfore variablenes hath not place with God, and that he is manifestly proued to be the author of all goodnes, who can without blasphemie attribute vnto him those thinges that be euell? Fourthly he addeth: or shadowv of turning. These wordes also seeme to be a preuenting of an obiection. We see that the turning and chaunge of the heavenly lights is diuers and manifold. For the sunne sometime shineth bright & cleare, sometime agayne it being as it were darkened is hidden from vs. Least that anye attribute vnto God anye such shadowe, he proueth, that he is free from all shadowe of turning. Wherevpon it maye be gathered seeing he is alwaye like himselfe, that nothing but that which is good doth proceede from him. Fifthly he sayth: of his ovvne good vvill begate he vs vwith the vvorde of truth. This he addeth for examples sake. For God when we were by our first natiuitie the children of wrath and damnation, of his mere fatherly goodwill made vs his children by the word of truth, that is, by the Gospell. For he which beleueth the Gospell, is made the sonne of God by the spirite of Christ. Seing therefore God doth vouchsafe vs so great honour, who beleueth that he doth prouoke any man to doe euell? Sixthly is added an argument of the ende of our regeneration when he saith: that vve should be as the first frutes of his creatures, that is, that we should be holy. Inasmuch therfore as he hath begat vs that we should be holy, it is an absurd thing to thinke that he maketh vs defiled by prouoking

The fourth
reason.

The fift
reason.

The sixt
reason.

prouoking vs to doe euell. When as he calleth the saintes the first frutes, he alludeth vnto the custome of the lawe, wherby the first frutes were consecrated vnto God, wherupon we are admonished continually to meditate on true holines. Here also he putteth a difference betweene the Church and the rest of the world. For as the Church is holy and dedicated to God: so the rest of the world wrapped in it filthines is prophane and wicked. Furthermore, vpon this doctrine of regeneration the Apostle maketh these exhortations following:

The Church and the world differ much.

19 VVherefore my deare brethren, let euery man be swift to heare, slowe to speake, and slowe to vvrath.

By the example of Christ, Paule, Peter, yea, and of all the Prophetes and Apostles, he, by the vertue of regeneration maketh a necessitie of liuing godly and holily, for godlynesse and holynesse is the proper effect of regeneration. And bicause God requireth a certayne circumcision of the eares and of the lips, James vjgeth the same, and will haue him that is regenerate, swift to heare and learn those things which are good and healthfull, but slowe to speake. By which saying, he will haue first that the tounge doe not runne befoze the witte. Secondly, that we doe flie trifling, bayne, and rayling speaches. Thirdly, that we speake only things necessarie, whiche tende to edifying and honestie. Herewith very well agreeth the saying: Either speake that which is better than silence, or else altogether keepe silence.

The circumcision of the eares and lips wherein it consisteth.

20 For the vvrath of man doth not accomlishe the righteousness of God.

What kynde of wrath is here forbidden, is to be gathered both by the reason which is vnder annexed, and also by the conclusion, yea, by the whole circumstance of this place. The vvrath of man, sayth he, doth not accomplish the righteousness of God, that is, it doth not execute that,

E.ii.

which

A Commentarie vpon the

What kinde
of wrath the
Apostle for-
biddeth.

which God speaketh and prescribeth, nay it maketh that thou doest in vaine heare God speaking. Wherefore wrath in this place is taken for that wrath, which proceedeth of a desire to contende, whereby the audience is hindred. The Apostle therefore wil haue one to heare another, their affections being appeased and quieted. For where tumults and contentions haue place, the righteousnesse of God is banished, that is, those thinges are nothing accounted of, which God prescribeth to vs, and requireth of vs.

21 VVherefore lay apart all filchinesse and superfluitie of malitiousnes, and receyue vvith meekenesse the vvord that is grafted in you, vvich is able to saue your soules.

A description
of the true
hearers of the
word of God.

This is the conclusion of the exhortation, in which he exhorteth vs that we be swift to heare without wrath. This place doth verpe well teach what hearers the worde of God requireth. First, filchinesse and superfluitie of malitiousnesse ought to be away, that is, the affections of the fleshe and reason ought to giue place to the word of God, that they stirre not by contentions, whereupon wrath ariseth. Secondly, meekenesse ought to be present, which succedeth in y place of wrath. Meekenesse here is as much as modestie or aptnes to learne. Thirdly, the mind being thus ordered & prepared, the word which is grafted in vs is to be receiued, that is, y word is to be receiued by faith which is grafted & implanted in vs by the labour and travail of the Ministers. Fourthly, y effect of the word receyued is added, y by it as by a pricke we should be stirred by to heare more diligently: vvich, sayth he, is able to saue your soules, and that bicause sayth is conceived by hearing the worde of God, whereby man being iustified, is enforced to giue himselfe to newnesse of lyfe, whereupon it followeth:

The effect of
the worde of
God faithfully
receyued.

22 And be ye doers of the vvord and not hearers only, deceyuing your ovvne selues.

What

Epistle of S. James.

15

What kynde of hearer the Apostle requireth, he declareth in these wordes. We will haue that we be not only hearers of the word, as the greatest part of men is, but doers also, that is, such, as in whom the word being engrafted, doth take roote, which commeth to passe when fayth is conceived by the worde, and our obedience doth witnesse our fayth. This Christ calleth to keepe the worde, when he sayth: *Blessed are they that heare the worde of God, and keepe it.* Moreover, we must note, that one is sayde to be a doer of the worde, after two sortes, to wit, according to the rule of the lawe, and according to the grace of the Gospel. According to the rule of the lawe he is sayde to be a doer of the worde, which doth perfectlye fulfill the lawe, which Paule Rom. 1. 2. 3. sheweth by foure most euident reasons, that no man liuing is able to performe. He is sayde to be a doer of the worde according to grace, who by true godlynesse doth witnesse his fayth conceived by the worde, and doth all his lyfe long as much as maye be in this corrupt nature, meditate vpon true repentance. Although he falleth sometime eyther knowing or through ignorance, he doth by and by through true repentance returne to the Lorde, as infinite examples of the Saints do witnesse. Why he will haue men doers of the worde, and not hearers onely, he sheweth when he addeth: deceiuing your selues, that is, beguyling your selues through deceytfull imaginations, or through your owne subtiltie, as not only hypocrites doe, which put trust and confidence in outward worke without true repentance: but also many, who vnder the name of Christians beare a Turkeish minde. These alway haue fayth in their mouthes, they alway glozie of the benefites of the mediatur although they neuer thinke vpon true repentance.

23 For if any heare the vword and doe it not, he is like vnto a man that beholdech his naturall face in a glasse.

E.iii.

24 For

What it is not only to heare the word, but also to doe it.

Luk. 11. 28.

Two sortes of doers of the word.

A doer of the word according to the lawe.

A doer of the word according to grace.

The reason why we must be not only hearers, but also doers of the word.

5
2 13

A Commentarie vpon the

24 For vwhen he hath considered himselfe, he goeth his vway, and forgetteth immediatly vwhat maner of one he vvas.

Why wee
must not bee
hearers onely
he proueth by
a worthie
similitude.

The workes
of hypocrites
fitly compa-
red to an i-
mage appea-
ring in a glasse

By a very excellent similitude he rendreth a reason why he will not haue a hearer of the word onely. The which similitude is thus much in effect: Euen as he that beholdeth his image or shape in a glasse, doth retayne in his minde a knowledge which soone passeth away, and a weake memory of his forme, and therefore such a contemplation profiteth nothing: so a hearer of the word onely retayneth no firme and sure knowledge. For forthwith after he hath heard it, it vanissheth away, and therefore such knowledge is vnprofitable, and nothing auayleth the hearer. Hypocrisie is verie properly and fitly compared to an image appearing in a glasse. For as in a glasse although there appeare a certaine similitude, yet it is false, inas- much as those thinges are represented in the glasse on the left hand, which are in deede on the right, and those that are on the right hand, are shewed to be on the left, and by this meanes there is a counterfayting of the truth: so in the workes of hypocrites although there be a fayre shewe outwardly in the sight of men, yet it is false, for that those thinges which are vngodly and wicked are counted holy and true. If any man demaund how it commeth to passe that there is such a slender knowledge and so weake a memory by the beholding of the glasse, let him know that the maner of doing according to the philosophers doth follow the maner of being. For, bicause y image or shape in a glasse doth but only seeme to be, & is not in dede, it com- meth to passe y it maketh so weake & slender an impressi- on in y mind, as we see to be done in certain dreames also.

25 But vwho so looketh in the perfect lawv of libertie, and continueth therein, he not being a forgetfull hearer, but a doer of the vvorke, shall be blessed in his deede.

He

Epistle of S. James.

16

He declareth who is to be counted a doer of the word, and that, as I admonished before according to grace, and not according to the rigour of the law. He calleth the law perfect, bicause it prescribeth a perfect rule to liue by: he calleth it of libertie, bicause that how much more a man is giuen and addicted to it, so that he beleue in Christ, so much the more he declareth himselfe to be free. For to serue God is to reigne. He that looketh in this law, to the intent he may thoroughly knowe it and expresse it in his life, he, sayth the Apostle, is not a forgetfull hearer of the word, but a doer of it, who also shal be blessed in his deede. For sayth is knowne by the effects as a tree by the fruits, which sayth onely doth apprehend Christ, who alone of God is made vnto vs wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption, that he that reioyceth should reioyce in the Lord. James therefore speaketh here of the qualitie of them that are iustified, and of the rewardes of their obedience, and not of the causes of their iustifying. Bernard sayth: Good workes are not the causes of reigning, but the way to the kingdome.

VWhy the law is called perfect.

VWherefore he calleth it a law of libertie

VWho is not a forgetfull hearer.

1. Cor. 1. 30.

26 If any man among you seemeth religious and refraineth not his tongue, but deceiueh his owne heart, this mans religion is vayne.

He reprehendeth hypocrites which did boast that they did religiously obserue the lawe, and yet in the meane time were giuen to backbiting and sclaundering, which vice is common among all hypocrites, as the historie of the Gospell doth shewe in the Pharise, who gloried of his religion, and in the meane season accused other men with his sclaunderous tongue. From whence this vice proceedeth he sheweth when he addeth: but deceiueh his owne heart, that is, is a louer of him selfe. For he iudgeth that he is godly and religious, but his religion is in vayne, as is proued by the reason following:

An vsuall vice among hypocrites.

27 Pure religion and vndefiled before God euen the

E.iiii,

father,

A Commentarie vpon the

father, is this, to visit the fatherles and vviddowes in their aduersitie, and to keepe himsele vnspotted of the vworld.

Certayne properties of them that are truly religious

He proueth by certayne properties of religion that hypocrites which are giuen to sclaundering and euil speaking are not truly religious: he concludeth his argument after this sort: They that are truly religious doe keepe themselves vnspotted of the world, and do shew mercy to the afflicted. Hypocrites which will seeme to be religious, doe not keepe themselves vnspotted of the world, neither shew mercy to the afflicted. Wherefore they are not religious, but rather vaine boasters of religion. It was not the purpose of James perfectly to define religion, but onely to set downe certayne properties thereof disagreeing with the vanitie of hypocrites. Wherefore they are not to be heard, which here sharply reprove and find fault with James as a man ignorant of true religion. For it is one thing to define a thing and an other to signifie or shew it by certayne signes and tokens. Which, it is an vnseemely thing and a shame, for the sharpe reprovers and taunters of James not to know. But this is a full and perfect definition of Christian religion: Christian religion is a lively sayth in Iesus Christ, and a confession thereof, wherto is ioyned a pure study of worshipping God, and sincere charity towards men together with a hope of immortality promised. The substantiall partes therefore of Christian religion by nature ioyned together, are sayth, the worship of God, charitie towards our neighbour, and hope of saluation promised by Christ.

A full and perfect definition of christian religion.

The

Chap. 2.

The summe of the second
Chapter.

AS he doth debort those that are conuerted from despi-
sing and disdainning the poore, and from accepting of
persons: so he doth condemne a vayne boasting of fayth,
which is voyde and destitute of it right and true frutes.

The order and partes of the
second Chapter.

THEre are two partes of this Chapter, the fyrst whereof
contayneth a deborting or diswading. For he doth there-
in debort Christians from accepting of persons. This parte
consisteth of a propositiō and a confirmation. The latter part
contayneth a teaching or instructing. For therein he tea-
cheth that that fayth is vayne which wanteth works. This
part also consisteth of a proposition and a confirmation.

The exposition of the second
Chapter with an obseruation of the
Doctrine.

- 1 My brethren, haue not the fayth of our Lord Iesus
Christ the Lorde of glory in respecte of persones.



This is the first proposition of this Chap-
ter contayning a certayne hidden reason
which is thus to be resoluēd and made
manifest: Brethren doe not accept per-
sons. This is the bare proposition. The
reason of the proposition is this, for that
the fayth of our Lord Iesus Christ and the accepting of
persons doe so disagree, that they cannot stand together.
Why so? Because the glory of Christ requireth, that we

To haue re-
spect of per-
sons is not a-
greeable to
the christian
fayth.

f. i.

reue

A Commentarie vpon the

reuerence all those, in whom Christ dwelleth. So the word of glory, was not added in vayne. It is an hebrue kind of speech, whereby the Genitiue cases of nounes appellatiues are put oftentimes in the place of Epithites. What? doth not the Psalm place him among the dwellers in y tabernacle of y Lord, that is, among the heires of eternall life, which contemneth a vile person, and honoureth them that feare the Lorde? Whether is this accepting of persons or no? Accepting of persons is properly, when as the true cause, by the which wee ought to pronounce of the person, being neglected, we doe consider in the persons some other thing without the cause, for which eyther we pronounce false sentence agaynst the person, or otherwise doe accept and fauour the person. Wherefore, this precept of the Apostle doth not subuert and ouerthrowe the order of God established in the * fourth commaundement concerning the honoz of superiours. But if any mā should despise a poore man that is godly, and preferre a rich man that is wicked, he, leauing the true cause shoulde iudge amisse, as James sheweth when he sayth:

- 2 For if there come into your company a man vwith a gold ring, and in goodly apparel, and there come in also a poore man in vile rayment,
- 3 And ye haue respect to him that vveareth the gaye clothing, and say vnto him, sit thou here in a goodly place, and say vnto the poore, stande thou there, or sit here vnder my foote stoole:
- 4 Are ye not partiall in your selues, and are become iudges of euill thoughtes?

By this example he declareth what maner of accepting of persons he condemneth, to wit, that, which followeth a false iudgement for a true in iudging men. For he which doth that, is not onely condemned by the iudgement of his owne conscience, but also his iudgement is peruerse and naughtie, which taketh riches for a rule of difference.

He

An obiection.

Psalm 134.

The answer.

The fist according to the diuision receiued among vs, for all do not diuide the commaundements alike, which notwithstanding is a thing indifferent: he foloweth here the custome of their Churches.

What maner of accepting of persons the Apostle disalloweth.

He doth not therfore simply forbid to honoz the rich, but he speaketh by the way of comparison, and condemneth him which honoureth wicked rich men with the contempt of godly pooze men. Wherefore that accepting of persons is here condemned, which followeth a false difference for a true, which keepeth not a right maner, which erreth from the right ende. If any man therfore preferreth a rich man before a pooze, bicause he is rich, his iudgement is peruerse and corrupt. Agayne, if thou doest so preferre a rich man before a pooze, that thou handle the pooze man reprochfully, there is sinne in the maner thereof. Finally, if thou preferre a rich man before a pooze to winne fauor thereby, thou hast erred from the right ende. For what thing is more unworthie than to despise the pooze man which is godly and learned, and honourably to receyue and entertayne the rich man which is vngodly and vnlearned? He which maketh such a difference with himselfe betwene the pooze man and the riche, is become a iudge of euill thoughtes, that is, is not rightly affected, but iudgeth peruersly agaynst the rule of godlynesse and charitie.

5 Harken my beloued brethren, hath not God chosen the poore of this vvorlde that they shoulde be rich in fayth, and heires of the kingdome vvhich he promised to them that loue him?

He doth in a short entrance or pface stirre by the hearers to be attentue to the argument which he afterwarde annexeth. God hath chosen the pooze of this world, which are rich in fayth, that they shoulde be heires of the kingdome, which he hath promised to them that loue him. Therefore the pooze of this world are not to be contemned. In this argument note the order of our restoring againe. In the first place is set election, which is noe where els to be sought but in Christ. Ephes. 1. In the second is set fayth, whereby generall election is applyed to the hearers

Why the poore of this vvorlde are not to be despised.

The order of the restoring agayne of mankind.

f. ii.

rrr

A Commentarie vpon the

vers of the Gospel. For God hath chosen on this condition if men be engrafted by fayth in his sonne without whom is no election but mere reprobation. In the third is put inheritance, whereby is signified adoption, by which the beleeuers receiue prerogatiue to be the sonnes of God. In the fourth is added loue, for that is the true fruite of fayth, and an affection proper to the sonnes of God. It is no maruaple therefore if God hath promised a kingdome to them that loue him. For they by fayth haue obtayned power to be the sonnes of God, yea and to be called heires of the heauenly kingdome. For it is manifest out of Paule that loue is not the cause of reigning when he sayth: *The gift of God is eternall life, through Iesus Christ our Lord.*

Rom. 6. 23.

Of Election.

This place doth admonish that I speake something concerning election. For I see not a few to erre from the true cause thereof. Paule sayth. 1. Cor. 1. 26. Brethren you see your calling, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble are called, but God hath chosen the foolish thinges of the world. &c. And here James saith: God hath chosen the poore of this vworld. Hereupon some do not rightly gather, y wise, mighty, noble and rich men are reprobates, & on the contrary, the ignorant, weake, vnnoble and poore are chosen. For if wisdom, power, noblenes and riches, which all are the giftes of God, were the cause of reprobation, and contrariwise, foolishnes weakenes, vnnoblenesse and pouertie were the cause of election, it should follow that all rich men are reprobates, and all poore men chosen, but both is false. For not a few rich and noble men are godly, chosen, and saued, and many poore men are vngodly, reprobates, and condemned. Why therfore doth Paule say: *Not many wise men, not many mighty, not many noble?* Paule doth not speake of the counsel of God, who will that al men shall be saued

Howe farre
some are de-
ceiued in the
doctrine of
election.

Epistle of S. James. 19

saue and come vnto the acknowledging of the truth.
*1. Timoth. 2. Which would haue no man to perish, but would
all men to come to repentance. 2. Pet. 3.* But he accuseth
the naughtines of men, which abuse the giftes of God to
their owne destruction. The Gospell calleth all, but some
pretend one thing, some an other, whereby they doe not
come. Many being entised, and as it were made drunken
with wisdom, many with might, many with noblenes,
many with riches, many also with other thinges cannot
abide the sweete sauour of the Gospell. Whereby it com-
meth to passe that not by the counsell of God, which hath
created no man to certayne damnation, but by their owne
fault they are not elect. For God will haue all at length to
be saued if so be that they doe embrace by fayth the author
of their saluation. They which contemne him, doe worthe-
ly fall away from saluation. For God will cast awaye
those and condennie them, no otherwise then an earthly
father doth cast of and disherit an obstinate and disobe-
dient sonne, which he woulde not haue done if he had o-
beyed his father. If therefore we consider the counsell or
purpose of our creation and restoring againe by Christ:
God in decde will haue all men to be saued, but yet by sal-
uation and life, that is by Christ the mediatour. But if
thou marke the euent or ende, he will condennie all, which
haue not obeyed him calling by his Gospell. This is con-
firmed by the saying of y^e Lord in *Matthew*: many be cal-
led, but few be chosen. Of this saying there are two parts,
the first commendeth vnto vs the goodnes of God, which
calleth many by his Gospell that they may be saued. For
we must not thinke that God calleth them whom he will
not haue saued. The latter part is a complaint of the grea-
test parte of men, which contemne the Gospell, and will
not liue worthy of so noble a calling. Whereof Christ com-
playneth in *Matthew*, where he is reprehended which had
not a wedding garment, to the which reprehension after-

Why so few
come, when
as God calleth
all by his
worde.

God will haue
all to be saued,
but yet by
such meanes
as he hath ap-
pointed, which
they that re-
fuse, are iustly
condemned.
Matth. 20. 16.
Many be cal-
led, but fewe
be chosen,
howe it is to
be vnderstand

J. iii.

warde

A Commentarie vpon the

Matth. 22.12. ward is ioyned this complaynt of Christe: few are chosen. This complaynt he also sheweth with teares. **Matth. 23.** whē he saith, *How often would I haue gathered thy children together, as the hen gathereth the chickens vnder her wings and ye would not?* Behold Christ will, Hierusalem will not. The meaning therefore of the saying of the Lord is: many be called, to wit, to obtayne saluation by Christ, so that they will beleue the Gospell. But fewe be chosen, that is, fewe haue the wedding garment, that is, fewe doe beleue and are godly in deede. That this is the signification of the word election, it is manifest out of the psalme, where elect and peruerse or frowarde are set one against the other, for he sayth thus: *with the elect thou shalt be elect, and with the froward thou shalt be froward.* Therefore he is sayd to be elect which is in deede a godly and sincere worshipper of God, keeping sayth and a good conscience. Wherefore there is no cause that any man should be troubled with thinking of his election, as though God had appointed some certayne men to saluation, and the greatest part of men to certaine damnation: but rather let him thinke, that this is the vnmoueable will of God, that as he will saue without difference all that be penitent: so on the contrarie he will condemne all that be impenitent. And these are saide not to be elect, because of the euent or ende. For they haue shutte from them selues the way of saluation. Let vs therefore obey the Gospell, let vs liue in true repentance, let vs not suffer our selues to be caried away from Christ with the cares of this world. But rather let vs preferre obedience toward the Gospell before al things of the world, whereby we may obtayne the saluation promised through our Lorde Iesus Christ, in whom God hath chosen the beleuers before y^e foundations of the world.

6 But ye haue despised the poore.

Psal. 18.25. By this setting of one contrarie against the other, he sheweth the grieuousnesse of the sinne. God doth honour the

Whom God will saue and whom he will condemne.

What al they must doe which mynde and desire to attayne saluation through Christ.

The poore in no wise to be contemned.

Epistle of S. James. 20

the poore that beleue, but you do despise the poore. Your sinne therefore is grievous and unworthie of the heires of the kingdome of God.

Doe not the rich oppresse you by tyrannie, and doe they not dravve you before the iudgement seates?

7 Doe not they blaspheme the vvorthe name, after vvhich ye be named?

In these wordes are conteyned two plaine arguments. It is a foolish thing for men to honoz them of whom they are oppressed and tormented, and to contemne them that excell in true godlynesse. You doe that when you doe honour your rich men which are tyrannes with the reproche and disdayne of the poore. The vngodly rich men do blaspheme that worthy name of Christ, whereby you will be named, and whereof you are called Christians, therefore it is an unworthie thing that you shoulde honour them with the contempt of the poore.

Vngodly rich men must not be honoured with contempt of godly poore men.

8 But if ye fulfill the royall lawe according to the Scripture, vvhich sayth: Thou shalt loue thy neighbour as thy selfe, ye doe vvell.

9 But if ye regarde the persons, ye commit sinne, and are rebuked of the lawe as transgressours.

This is a preuenting of an obiection. For he preuenteth the obiection of hypocrites, by the which they might excuse themselves, that they did well in honouring rich men, seeing that honour is included in the loue which the lawe doth require toward our neighbour. He aunswereth by a double condition: If you fulfill (that is, if you endeuor by true fapth and integritie of mynde to perfoyme it without colouring or hypocrisie. For here the worde of fulfilling is to be referred not to the degrees, but to the substance of obedience, or to the parts thereof) the royall lawe, (that is, the lawe which is like the kings hie way, that is, streight and playne, which leadeth the wayfaring man without turnings to the place appointed. But that kings hie way

F.iiii.

is

A Commentarie vpon the

is to loue our neighbour, and to consider this only in him, that he is our neighbour, and to haue respect to no other things in him, ye doe vuell, that is, your defence is iust. But if ye regarde the person, ye commit sinne, but that you regarde the person, it is manifest by your deede. For you honoz wicked rich men, and despise godly poore men, which truly is not to go in the kings hie way to the loue of your neighbour.

IO For vvhosoeuer shall keepe the vvhole lavv and yet faileth in one poynt, he is gilty of all.

II For he that sayd, thou shalt not commit adulterie, sayd also, Thou shalt not kill. Nowv though thou doest none adulterie, yet if thou killest, thou art a transgressour of the lavve.

He that faileth in one poynt of the lawe is gilty of the whole lawe.

The sixt and seuenth according to our diuision.

Diuers reasons which proue that all finnes are not alike, as the Stoicks doe falsly asarme.

He doth more forcibly vige the hypocrites, which did flatter them selues when as in one poynt of the law they had done their duty well, whose hypocrisie he reprehendeth by this argument: he which breaketh some one point of the law, is a transgressour of the lawe and gilty by the iudgement of the lawe. For he hath broken the whole law. This is declared by propounding an example of the * fift and sixt commaundement. He which of this place doth contend either that all sins are alike, or that the guiltines of euerie transgression is equale, doth wrongfully vnderstande and take the wordes of the Apostle, who in this place doth deale only with hypocrites which did iudge the perfection of the lawe in part, agaynst whome the Apostle setteth transgression in part. But that sinnes be not alike or equall, as the Stoicks woulde haue them, first it is euident by the causes. For who doth not percepue that it is more grienous to sinne of malicousnes, than of infirmitie or ignorance. Secondly, the euent proueth the same. He which sinneth wittingly and willingly, doth as it were shake of the holy ghost, but he that falleth through weaknesse, doth not so. Thirdly, the vnequalitie of the punishment,

Epistle of S. James.

21

ment, wherewith God the iust iudge punisheth, doth conclude the vnequalitie of sinnes. *That seruant that knewe Luk. 12. 47.*
his maisters will, and prepared not himselfe, neyther did according to his will, shall be beaten with many stripes. Fourthly, euery mans owne conscience doth naturally vnderstande the degrees of sinnes, for they are vexed with some more, with some lesse. Fifthly, the lawe of God and all ciuill lawes doe acknowledge degrees of sinnes according to which they doe moderate punishments. The arguments of the Stoickes haue a fayre shewe, but they are grounded on a false foundation, agaynst which let those reasons be set which I haue rehearsed.

12 So speake ye, and so doe, as they that shall be iudged by the lawe of libertie.

13 For there shall be condemnation mercilesse to him that shevereth not mercie, and mercie reioyceth against iudgement.

He bringeth in a generall exhortation to liue godly and holily, by an argument taken of the sentence of the last iudgement, which is recited *Matth. 25.* For when as the Apostle sayth: as they that shall bee iudged by the lawe of libertie, he hath relation to the sentence of the Lorde, who when he iudgeth the worlde, shall saye vnto them on his right hand: Come ye blessed of my father, take the inheritance of the kingdome prepared for you from the foundations of the worlde. For I was an hungred, and ye gaue me meate. &c. Contrariwise he shall say to them on the left hande: Depart from me ye cursed into euerlasting fire. I was an hungred, and ye gaue me no meate. &c. To this pertayneth that saying: *Iohn. 5.* The houre shall come in the which all that are in the graues, shal heare his voice, and they shall come forth, that haue done good vnto the resurrection of life: but they that haue done euell vnto the resurrection of condemnation. And *2. Cor. 5.* We must all appeare before the iudgement seate of Christ, that euery man

G. i.

may

Matth. 25. 34.
The sentence
of the last iud-
gement, and
the maner
thereof.

Iohn. 5. 28.

A Commentarie vpon the

Why the A-
postle calleth
it the lawe of
libertie.

Matth. 16. 27.

2. Cor. 5. 10.

How the sen-
tence of the
last iudge-
ment is to be
applied to the
wicked, and
how to the
godly.

may receiue the things which are done in his bodie, according to that he hath done whether it be good or euill. That these sayings and such like are to be vnderstand of the qualitie of the that shal be saued, & not of the causes of saluation, the whole consent of scripture, yea, the precious blood of Christ doth shew, as shortly after I will more distinctly declare. But why doth he call it the law of libertie? That by that name he may shew the fruites of libertie are by good right required of christians. For as he which doth commit sinne, is the seruant of sinne: so he which is deliuered by Christ, will be no more bonde but free, & therefore will not take vpon him the yoke of bondage. He sheweth a cause or reason when he sayth: for there shall be condemnation mercilesse to him that sheweth not mercie, but he that sheweth mercie, is so farre of from being condemned, he shal reioyce against condemnation, triumphing ouer death, sin, and the deuill. These things doe teach, how necessary continuall repentance and a perpetuall studie of godlynesse and righteousnesse is among Christians, least by their owne fault they lose the free benefit of saluation. But bicause the aduersaries of free saluation doe abuse this place and such like, and make the causes of saluation of the tokens and qualities of them which shal be saued, I will briesly gather an aunswere, whereby the godly reader may haue, wherewith he maye be able thoroughly and truly to answere to this false cauill. Seing therefore that the Scripture doth exprestely say, that the Lord shall giue to euery man according to his deedes. Or as Paule speaketh to the Corinethians: according to that euery man hath done whether it be good or euill: First of all, this is to be helde, that this generall sentence which is the very voyce of God himselfe, ought to be applied vnto two sortes of men, according to the proportion of sayth, that is, to the wicked, according to the lawe, to the godly, according to the Gospell after this maner: when the Lord giueth vnto the

the wicked according to their dedes, without all doubt he giueth vnto them hel and condemnation. For those are the merits of the dedes of vngodlines. But concerning þe godly or regenerate, there are no things to be considered. For first it is euident out of the infallible worde of God, that eternall life is not the wages of seruantes, but the inheritance of childe, and the free gift of God. Rom. 4. 5. 6. 8. Iohn. 1. 3. 5. Secondly, the proportion betwene the heauely father and an earthly father is to be considered: for as an earthly father doth giue vnto his childe according to their dedes, that is, inheritance to them that are obedient, and disheriteth them that are disobedient: so God the father promisseth inheritance to his childe, but those which of childe are made obstinate and enemies, he suffereth not to enioy the inheritance. But now it is manifest that the childe of an earthly father are neither childe nor heires through desert of their workes. After the same sort the childe of God are neyther made childe nor heires because of their workes, but through the grace of adoption, which is receyued by fayth alone, notwithstanding eyther of them doth giue vnto his childe according to their dedes. But þe this may yet be more plainly vnderstand, how God shall giue to euery mā according to his dedes, foure circumstances are to be weighed of vs, the first wherof is, that the rigour of the law is takē away from þe godly, according to þe saying Galat. 3. *Christ hath redemed vs from the curse of the lawe.* The seconde is, that the person nowe beleeuing doth by fayth please God and is heire of eternall life. Iohn. 1. The thirde, that God doth not onely require obedience of the person that beleueth, but also doth promise him a rewarde, and that not of debt for the worthinesse of the worke, but of grace for his fatherly promise sake: The fourth, that workes so done by fayth, are testimonies of fayth, as proper effectes are most certaine tokens of their cause. And therefore it is sayde that God shall giue vnto

VVe are heires
not through
workes but
through grace

G.ii.

euery

A Commentarie vpon the

Why it is
sayd that eue-
ry man shall
be iudged ac-
cording to his
deedes.

every man according to his deedes, both because deedes are the true tokens of the feare of God & of fayth, and also that the whole creature maye beare witnesse of the iustice of God in iudging. This answere is taken from the conferring of the Scripture, which we must of necessitie surely hold, lest that with the Papistes we attribute saluation to the merits of workes, or with the *Antinomians* and *Liberatines* we lay aside all care and studie to do well. This solution is made manifest by an euident example. *Mat. 18.* where y^e Lord saith that y^e kingdome of heauen is likened vnto a certayne king, that is, that there is the same reason of the spiritual state of the Church, which is betweene an earthly king and his seruants in the affaires of this present life. For euen as the king, his seruant owing him ten thousand talents, yet when he fell downe and besought him, he forgave him the whole dette freely and of his mere liberalitie: so God the father doth freely forgue them all debtes, that is, sinnes, which flie vnto him for succour with trust and confidence in Christ. Hereof it is manifest that remission of sinnes is free. But euen as the king called agayne vnto punishment that seruant, being vnthankfull and cruell toward his fellowseruants, and that which before he forgave him when he humbly besought him, now he requireth agayne of him being stubborne and cruel toward his fellowes: So God, after he hath receiued vs being sorie for our sinne, into fauour, will haue vs imitate his example in liberalitie and goodnes toward our neighbour. This the Lord teacheth *Luke. 7.* propounding an example of two debtors, the one whereof ought vnto the lender five hundred pence, and the other fiftie: who when they had nothing to pay, he forgave them both. Here the Lord asked the Pharises whether of them will loue the lender most, to whom when the Pharise had made answere, he to whom he forgave most, the Lord sayd, thou hast truly iudged: signifying that God doth re-
quire

Epistle of S. James.

23

quire thankfulness of them, whom he hath freely receiued into fauour. Hereof are gathered two thinges, to wit, both that forgiveness is free, and also that they which haue obtained forgiveness, doe owe thankfulness vnto God.

14 VVhat auayleth it my brethren though a man sayth he hath sayth, vwhen he hath no vvorkes, can that faith saue him?

Bicause there were among them to whom the Apostles did write, hypocrites, which when they were touched with no true repentance, yet they did boast that they were saued by faith, when as they had no true and liuely faith in dede: he maketh a confutation of their erroneous opinion, and teacheth that that faith is bayne, which doth not bring forth it true fruites. This proposition is diligently to be marked, faith which hath not workes is vneffectuall and bayne, or as James speaketh, cannot saue. This onely proposition is confirmed euen vnto the end of the chapter. Therefore they are fowly deceiued which compare James with Paule, when as James disputeth onely of the bayne boasting of hypocrites, Paule of a liuely faith. And therefore let vs diligently marke in this place, what faith the Apostle calleth bayne, to wit that, which hath no obedience toward God accompanying it, in asmuch as it neither worshippeth God nor dooth wel to it neighbour, whereupon it manifestly followeth that James doth not speake of a liuely and a right faith, from which the spirit of Christ can not be separate. For where the spirit of Christ is, there are newe actions of the newe man, although not perfect, yet vnperfect, by which the force and vertue of faith is acknowledged and brought forth. What therefore is that bayne faith? is it altogether vneffectuall? It bringeth forth no good fruites, (for it is boyde of life) but it bringeth forth the bitter fruites of hell and death. For it is a most fruitfull mother of vanitie, superstition, and hypocrisie, it is a foolish boasting, it is but an image of faith,

G.iii.

it

That sayth which bringeth not forth good workes, is not true, but vayne, and cannot saue.

Paule and James speake diuersly of sayth.

VVhat fruites a vayne and false sayth bringeth forth.

A Commentarie vpon the

it is a stoppe or let from saluation, it is a guider or leader vnto death, briefly it hath it portion with hypocrites and deuels.

15 For if a brother or a sister be naked and destitute of dayly foode,

16 And one of you saye vnto them, depart in peace, warme your selues, and fill your bellies, notwithstanding ye giue them not those thinges, vvhich are needeful to the body, vvhath helpeth it?

17 Euen so the faith, if it haue no vvorkes, is dead in it selfe.

He proueth
by a very fit
similitude
that fayth
without good
workes is
vaine.

He maketh manifest the proposition by a most apt similitude. Euen as that speech is vayne, wherein it is sayde to the needy, warme your selues and fill your bellies, when as helping handes are not also put to: so that fayth is vayne and dead which is in the mouth without the fruite of workes. Note here the name of faith, (which he calleth vaine) for when it is called deade, it is compared to a carcas, wherefore it deserueth no better to be called faith, then a carcas deserueth to be called a liuing creature. This vsing of one word for another doth sufficiently shew y^e James doth dispute of a vayne opiniō, which of y^e hypocrites was called faith, according therfore to the opinion y^e they had of fayth, y^e Apostle speaketh by a licence of rhetorike.

18 But some man might say, thou hast the faith and I haue vvorkes: shew me thy faith out of thy vvorkes, and I vvill shew thee my faith by my vvorkes.

Another reason
proving
fayth which
is without
good workes
to be vayne.

An other reason that faith which is voyde of it fruites is vayne, as if he sayde: some godly man, O thou hypocrite, may repress thy vanitie by obiection thus vnto thee: thou hypocrite hast faith, as thou sayest, (for it is a licence of scorning) I haue workes, thou, if thou can, shew me thy faith by thy workes, which truly thou canst not doe, because thou hast none: I will shew thee my fayth by my workes.

Wherefore it is manifest that thy faith is like vnto a dead carcas

Epistle of S. James.

24

carkas, but that myne is liuely, which appeareth by the frutes and liuely motion therof. For euen as the spirite which is inwardly in a liuing creature quicke and lusty doth bewray it selfe by mouing and feeling and by the outward actions: so a liuely fayth doth shewe it selfe by good workes. The word fayth is here vſed in diuers significati- ons. For in the first place it signifieth a boasting of fayth: but in the latter place a liuely fayth.

A proper ſi- militudo.

19 Thou beleueſt that there is one God: thou doeſt vvell: the deuils alſo beleue it and tremble.

He teacheth both what the fayth of hypocrites is, alſo how vaine it is, yea and that it doth not ſaue. He affirmeth therefore that there fayth is only a knowledge of the hy- ſtory. For they beleue that there is a God. That this is vaine, he proueth by this reaſon: the fayth of the deuils doth not ſaue. For the deuils are not ſaued. The boasting of hypocrites is the fayth of the deuils: for it hath nothing in it, which the fayth of the deuils hath not. Therefore the boasting of the hypocrites which they falſly cal fayth, doth not ſaue, and therefore is vayne. Whereas the Apoſtle in this place doth acknowledge no other fayth in hypocrites, then is in the deuils, it is no meruaile, becauſe he taketh from it the power of iuſtifying. But of what ſort fayth is in the diſputations of Paule, it is taught Rom. 4. by a ma- niſeſt example propounded, to wit, that it is not onely a knowledge of the mercy promiſed, but alſo a truſt and con- fidence, whereby a man determineth with himſelfe that the promes doth appertaine vnto him, wherewith is ioyned as an vnſeparable companion thankfulneſſe of mind toward God, prayer, patience, mortifying of the olde man, ſtirring vp of the newe man, and other frutes of the righteousnes of fayth, which frutes although they doe not iuſtifie, yet that is the nature of a iuſtifying fayth that it alwayes bringeth forth thoſe frutes ſometime moze, ſometime leſſe, euen as it hath receiued increaſe.

Another rea- ſon prouing the fayth of hypocrites to be vayne and not able to ſaue.

VVhat kynde of faith Paule ſpeaketh of.

Frutes of true fayth.

G. iiii.

20 But

A Commentarie vpon the

20 But wilt thou vnderstand, O thou vaine man, that the faith vvhich is vvithout vvorkes is dead?

21 Vvas not Abraham our father iustified through vvorkes, vvhen he offred Isaac his son vpō the alter?

22 Seest thou not that the faith vvrought vvith his vvorkes? and through the vvorkes vvas the fayth made perfect.

23 And the Scripture vvas fulfilled vvich sayth: Abraham beleued God and it vvas imputed vnto him for righteousnes: and he vvas called the frend of God.

24 Ye see then hovv that of vvorkes a man is iustified and not of faith onely.

That our faith ought to haue good vvorkes ioyned with it, it is proued by the example of Abraham.

What James meaneth by this word iustified, which the Scholmen haue wrested, as it is proued by three firme and strong reasons. The first reason.

The summe of this reason is this: Such as the fayth of Abraham was, ought also the fayth of other beleeuers to be. (For he is therefore called the father of the beleeuers, bicause that they that beleue ought to imitate and follow his fayth): but the faith of Abraham had vvorkes ioyned with it (which is thereby proued, bicause he did so much esteeme obedience toward God, that he would rather kill his onely sonne, then not obey God) Therefore the fayth of other also ought to haue vvorkes ioyned with it, which if it haue not, it is worthely to be accounted baine and dead. This is the summe of the argument. Now let vs wey the vvordes of the Apostle, which are wrested of the Schoolemen against free iustification. First the word iustified is to be discusled, which is as much, as if he had sayd, was declared to be iust, or was knowen to be iustified and that this is so I proue by three necessarie arguments. The first is taken of the scope and end of this present disputatiō. For James hath not purposed a disputation of the causes of iustification, but onely doth shew by what effects iustification may be gathered, and as it were set before the eyes of men. Seing therefore it is an exceeding great error, of effects to make causes in respect of the same thing,

thing, they are by no meanes to be borne, which forgetting the scope & ende of the disputation & proposition that is to be proued, presume very high, & go about to disproue the doctrine of Paul concerning free iustification, when as the purpose of Paul was far otherwise thā of James. For Paul seeketh the cause of iustification: James the effects of the same: Paul descendeth frō y causes to y effects: James contrariwise ascendeth frō the effects to y causes. Paul seeketh how we are iustified: James how we are declared to be iustified. Paule excludeth works as causes of iustification: James includeth the same, as the effectes of iustification. Seing there is so great difference betwene the purpose of Paule and James, who seeth not the vanitie of the Scholemen, which say that the Apostles are contrary the one to the other. The seconde necessarie argument is taken of the order of the causes and the effects, *Genes. 15.* Abraham is pronounced to be iustified. *Abraham beleued the Lord, and he counted that to him for righteousness.* But this came to passe thirtie yeares at the least, before he receyued a commaundement concerning the offering of his sonne Isaac. *Genes. 22.* Howe therefore can it be that he shoulde be sayde to be iustified by that worke, which he did the thirtie yere after y he was by the voyce of God said to be iustified. It is necessarie therfore that to be iustified in James doe signifie to be declared iustified.

The thirde necessarie argument is taken of the wordes of the Angell, *Genes. 22.* After that Abraham had purposed to kil his sonne at the commaundement of God, & was called back from his purpose by the voyce of the Angel, he heareth of the Angell: *Now I know that thou fearest God, seing for my sake thou hast not spared thine only son.* What other thing, I pray you, do these wordes meane, than that y voluntarie obedience of Abraham was a testimonie of the feare of God, & a certaine declaration of the iustification of Abraham. And thus briezly it is declared, what the word

W. i.

of

Paule and James are nothing contrarye the one to the other, but there is difference onely in the purpose of them both.

The seconde reason concerning the taking of this word iustified

The third infallible argument concerning the taking of this word iustified
Gen. 22. 12.

A Commentarie vpon the

of iustification doth signifie in this disputation of James. Afterwarde when he sayth that the fayth vvrought vvith his vvorkes, he expresseth the nature of a liuely fayth, to wit, that it is effectuell and full of good vvorkes. Seing that the fayth of hypocrites hath not this nature, it is in no case to be iudged a true and liuely fayth. This saying therefore of James doth teach nothing else, but that good vvorkes doe proceede of fayth. That which James addeth: through the vvorkes, the fayth vvas made perfect, is nothing els than y^e the fayth of Abraham was declared by his vvorkes, not to haue bene counterfait or hypocriticall, but true and sincere. For if thou doest cal that perfect here, which is in it degrees absolute, no mortall man liuing at any time hath had a perfect fayth. Moreouer, when he sayth that the scripture was fulfilled which saith: Abraham beleueed God, and it vvas imputed vnto him for righteousness, that is not to be referred vnto the cause, but vnto the effect. For by that deede Abraham declared that he was in very deede iustified before by fayth. This fulfilling therefore ought to be referred to the experience of men, and not to the iudgement of God.

What it meaneth that Abrahams faith was made perfect through vvorkes.

25 Likevvise also vvas not Rahab the harlot iustified through vvorks, vvhen she had receyued the messengers, and sent them out another vvay?

Another example that true fayth is not destitute of good vvorkes.

He proueth by another example y^e a true & a liuely faith is not without vvorks. Rahab by her deede or vvorks declared hir selfe to be iustified by fayth, when vvith the perill of her life she sent away y^e messengers of the people of God, least they shoulde come into the hands of them that sought them.

26 For as the bodie vvithout the spirit is dead: euen so the fayth vvithout vvorkes is deade.

Hypocrites say this vaine.

By a most apt similitude propounded, he proueth that the fayth of hypocrites is bayne, in as much as it is like a deade bodie or carcas, wherein is no liuely spirite, and there-

therefore no mouing or sense of a liuing creature is founde in it. And thus James by sixe firme reasons hath proued that a true fayth is frutesfull in good workes, and that the fayth of hypocrites, which is voyd of workes, is a bayne boasting rather than fayth.

*A declaration of the doctrine of
repentance.*

When as Christ doth define the Gospel to be preaching of repentance and forgiuenesse of sinnes in his name: he setteth forth two things vnto vs, whereof one is the benefite which the Gospell offereth, the other, the meanes by which the benefite is applyed vnto men. The benefite which is offered, is forgiuenesse of sinnes. The meanes is repentance. For they onely which repent, are made partakers of the forgiuenesse of sinnes, wherewith is ioyned iustification, saluation, and eternall lyfe. Hereof it easily appeareth, that nothing is more necessarye for a man in this life, than to vnderstande wherein true repentance consisteth, without the which forgiuenesse of sinnes commeth vnto no man. Of this wholsome and true repentance I will speake, and will so declare the matter by the worde of God, and manifest examples, that euery man may acknowledge the truth and playnnes thereof.

The Gospell is the preaching of repentance and forgiuenesse of sinnes.

The foundation therfore of the preaching of repentance without all doubt is the mercie and grace of God, according to these sayings: Repent, for the kingdome of God is at hande. Nowe the kingdome of God is the kingdome of grace, in which Christ being a King and Priest doth reygne. Ierem. 36. Returne euery man from his euill waye, that I may forgiue their iniquitie and their sinnes. Againe, I desire not the death of the wicked, returne and come againe. Also, O ye disobedient children returne and I will heale your rebellions. And Christ saith: I am not come to call the righteous, but the sinners to repentance.

The first foundation of the preaching of repentance. Matth. 3.2.

Ierem. 36.3.

Ezech. 33.11.

Ierem. 3.22.

Matth. 9.13.

These testimonies doe sufficiently proue that mercie
through

Th.ii.

A Commentarie vpon the

through Christ is the foundation of the preaching of repentance. For without all doubt, repent, or as the Prophetes speake, returne, is not the voyce of the lawe condemning, but of God hauing mercie, and offering saluation, life and deliuerance from the sentence of the law that condemneth. Wherefore there is no doubt but the preaching of repentance is a part of the preaching of the Gospell, especiallye since it is manifest that the lawe doth preach vnto sinners eternall punishment: and Christ being rayled vp from the dead, doth affirme that repentance and forgiveness of sinnes is to be preached in his name. But because there are two things in man which doe hinder him that he cannot see his euilles, and repent and amende at the voyce of the Gospell, to wit, ignorance and dulnesse or sluggishnesse. The Lorde doth giue a remedie for both these euils. He remediethe ignorance by the lawe. For by the preaching of the lawe he bringeth vs to the knowledge of sinne, whereof the Gospell biddeth vs repent, that we may be saued. By the lawe, as Paule sayth, *commeth the knowledge of sinne*. Dulnesse or sluggishnesse he shaketh of by diuers meanes: he setteth forth threatenings of eternall death, he denounceth wrath and displeasure agaynst them that doe not amende. He chasteneth the impenitent with corporal punishments, with diseases, and by diuers other meanes, he setteth tragicall and lamentable examples befoze their eyes, as of Cain, Iudas, Saule, Achitophel, and diuers others, which examples Christ doth applie vnto all, when he sayth: *Except ye amende your liues, ye shall all likewise perishe*. He witnesseth his wrath and displeasure by diuers signes in the heauen, the earth, and in the sea, sometime by pestilence, sometime by warres he stirreth vs vp to obey the voyce of the Gospell: he setteth forth the death of his sonne, which doth witness of the wrath of God agaynst sinners, except they repent, *Act. 2*. Christ which calleth all that be weary and laden,

Two things
ther be which
hinder repen-
tance in vs,
wherunto the
Lord addeth
remedies.

A remedie a-
gaynst our
ignorance.

Rom. 3. 20.

How the Lord
driueth away
our sluggish-
nesse

Luke. 13. 3.

den, unto him, & they being conuerted by repentance, may be eased of their burden, doth sende the Lawyer, that doth not acknowledge his euill, vnto the law. We haue a most excellent and liuely example hereof *Luk. 15.* in the prodigall sonne. He being first pinched with hunger, doth perceyue his euill. Then a hope of a better state if he did returne to his father, gaue to the yong man a mynde to repent, for he is encouraged by confidence in his fathers gentlenesse, to seeke for reconciliation. This example doth teach plainly, that the beginning of repentance is an acknowledging of the mercy of God, which stirreth vs up to hope well, which doe see and perceyue our owne euils and perils. For as this yong man through trust in his fathers clemencie, doth returne vnto his father, after that, he being taught by hunger did perceiue his euils: so we with confidence of mercy in Christ, doe returne vnto God, after that by the preaching of the lawe we haue come into the knowledge of our selues, & by feeling the curse and wrath of God doe shake of our dulnesse and sluggishnesse.

A liuely example.

Nowe what wholesome and true repentance is, and of what parres it consisteth, we will declare by testimonies of the Scripture, and by examples. *Ieremie* sayth: Let euery man returne from his euill way, and I will forgive your iniquitie and your sinnes. This saying conteyneth two things, a commaundement and a promise. The commaundement is, that the vngodly doe returne from his euill wayes. The promise is of reconciliation and attonement for sinne. Herevpon it is gathered, that repentance is a conuersion or a turning of man vnto God, in the which conuersion, he doth depart from euill, he beleueth the promise of reconciliation, and studieth to leade a newe lyfe according to the will of God.

What true repentance is.

Adam hauing fallen into sinne, did hyde himselfe with the leaues which he tooke of the tree, and did not see his euill, neyther as yet did knowe the promise concerning the

H.iii.

seede

A Commentarie vpon the

Howe Adam
by little and
little came
vnto true re-
pentance.

Dauid an ex-
ample wherein
the partes of
true repen-
tance are liue-
ly set forth.

Psal. 38. 3.

2. Sam. 12. 13.

Psal. 51. 1.

ver. 15.

ver. 13.

seede : but when he is accused by the voyce of God threat-
ning death vnto him, he acknowledgeth his sinne, which
also did exceedingly displease him, so that there was in
him a misliking of his fact, but not true repentance. But
when he heareth the promise concerning the seede of the
woman, which shoulde come, and breake the heade of the
serpent and abolishe sinne : he returneth vnto the Lorde
with true repentance, he is sorie for his sinne, he comfort-
teth himselfe with the fayth of the promise, calleth vppon
God, and taketh heede least that agayne he doth agaynst
his conscience offende God. Dauid hauing fallen into a-
dulterie, being as it were lulled a sleepe with a certayne
drowsinesse, doth liue securely, but when he is reprehend-
ed of the Prophet, he begynneth to lament his sinne, and
there were in him horrible terrours and extreme feare
which he himselfe describeth in the Psalmes : *There is no
rest in my bones bicause of my sinne : for he did feare euer-
lasting punishment. But hearing this voyce of the Pro-
phet by the commaundement of God : Thou shalt not die,
the Lorde hath put away thy sinne : He turneth agayne
vnto the Lorde and repenteth, he hateth his sinne, he flie-
th vnto mercie by fayth, saying : Haue mercie vpon me O
God, according to thy louing kindenesse. He promisseth obe-
dience in time to come : My mouth shall shewe forth thy
prayse. Also, I shall teach thy wayes vnto the wicked, and
sinners shall be conuerted vnto thee. In this example also
we see what conuersion is, what is the foundation and
partes thereof. Lyke vnto this were the examples of
Manasses, of the sinfull woman, of the theefe, of Peter,
of Paule : which examples when we doe applie them to
the rule, they doe most plainly set before vs the liuely for-
mes of true repentance. But bicause the doctrine of repen-
tance is chiefe in the Church, and bicause it is very pro-
fitable for men to be well instructed concerning it : we
will brieely declare by definitions the partes thereof, as
they*

they are taught in our Churches oute of the word of God and by famous and well knowne examples. The partes thereof as is sayd befoze are contrition, fayth, and newe obedience.

The partes of true repentance.

Contrition is not a misliking of the fact, as was in Judas, but it is the beginning of true repentance, to wit, an extreme feare of conscience for sinne, a true hatred of sinne, and an auoyding of sinne not without hope of pardon, as appeareth in the prodigall sonne. For a knowledge of mercy must of necessitie goe befoze true repentance, according to the saying of Ambrose: No man can repent except first he hopeth for pardon: and that of Augustine. The mercye of God is necessary not onely when we doe repent, but also that we may repent.

Contrition the first part of repentance what it is.

If fayth is a knowledge, consent, and desire of the promised mercy, and a sure confidence in Christ the mediator. Although the former examples and the fourth chap. to the Rom. doe confirme this definition, yet let vs adde moze reasons concerning the properties of fayth. Christ pronounceth them saued that beleue, therfore it must needes be that fayth doth signifie a trust in the promise, seeing that no man is saued by knowledge alone. Agayne, Paule doth sometime call this fayth a sure trust or confidence, sometime a perswasion, whereby a man doth certaynely perswade himselfe, that God both will, and also is able to performe that which he hath promised. This therfore is that fayth, by which alone without the workes of the law the Apostle affirmeth that a man is iustified befoze God. For such a fayth onely as we haue described, doth apprehende Christ and possesse him with all his benefites. I will therfore set forth a playne and manifest doctrine concerning this iustification which commeth by fayth in Christ, and will briesfly confute the errours with the which this doctrine both in time past and also in our age, is darkned and made obscure.

What fayth is, which is the seconde part of true repentance.

¶.iiii.

Iustifi-

A Commentarie vpon the

The definiti-
on of iustifi-
cation.

Fayth.

Rom. 3. 28.

Deliueraunce
from sinne.

1. Iohn. 1. 7.

Psal. 32. 1. 2.

Iohn. 3. 36.
Imputation
of righteous-
nesse.

Iustification is a deliuerance from sinne of the man that doth beleene in Christ, an imputation of the righteousness of Christ, and an accepting of him being iustified to life euerlasting, freely for Christes sake. In this definition five principall poynts are to be considered. First sayth by which the grace which is offred, is receyued, whereupon Paule sayth: we are iustified by fayth. For fayth is as it were a certayne hande, wherewith we receyue Christ offered vnto vs, with his obedience, that it may be our righteousness. The seconde is a clenſing or deliuerance from sinne through the satisfaction made by Iesus Christ, according to that saying of Iohn: The bloude of Iesus Christ clenſeth vs from all sinne. To this also belongeth that saying of Dauid: Blessed is he, whose wickednes is forgiven. Also, Blessed is the man vnto whome the Lorde imputeth not iniquitie. What deliuerance is, it is to be gathered by the definition of sinne. For as sinne is a defect or reuolting from the lawe and will of God, with a bonde vnto eternall death and condemnation: so deliuerance is the discharging or setting free of a man from the bonde of death and condemnation. But that this deliuerance doth come vnto him that beleueth in Christ, many testimonies doe witnes. He that beleueth in the son, hath euerlasting life. The third is the imputation of the righteousness of Christ. For his obedience, death, passion, and resurrection are the matter & foundation of our iustification. 2. Cor. 5. He hath made him to be sinne for vs, which knew no sinne, that we shoulde be made the righteousness of God in him. This righteousness, which he sayth that we are made in him, the Apostle defineth Rom. 5. when he sayth: As by one mans disobedience many were made sinners: so by the obedience of one shall many also be made righteous. Christian righteousness therefore is the obedience of Christ imputed to the beleuer. For fayth is imputed to hym for righteousness, which beleueth in him that iustificeth the

the wicked. Of these this also followeth, that the qualitie of righteousness is in Christ, but is imputed vnto vs which is proper vnto him. For we are so iust before God as Christ was a sinner. As he after a sort tooke vpon him our person, whereby he might be made guiltie in our name, and might be iudged as a sinner, not for his owne sinnes, but for the sinnes of other, seeing that he himselfe was pure and cleane frō all sinne, and might suffer punishment due vnto vs and not vnto him: So we now are iust in him, not because we do satisfie the iudgement of God with our workes, but because we are accounted righteous with the righteousness of Christ, which by fayth alone we doe put on, that it might be made ours. The fourth is an accepting of the person vnto eternall life. For Paule setteth this degree after iustification, Rom. 8. *Whom he iustified, them he also glorified.* To this belongeth the saying of the Lorde: *He that beleueth in me shall not perish, but shall haue euermoring life.* The fift, freely for Christes sake: freely that all the merites of men maye be excluded: for Christes sake, that the redemption of the onely begotten sonne of God may be acknowledged to be the merit of so great a treasure.

Howe we are
righteous be-
fore God.

Accepting of
vs vnto eter-
nall lyfe.

Although this doctrine of our Churches is grounded vpon the iust, sounde, and persite worde of God: yet there be diuerse and sundrie errors spred abroad agaynst it. For there be some which place this iustification of man in the workes done of men: other some will needes haue it to consist of fayth and workes together: some go about to establish a certayne essentiall righteousness. Although these things which we haue spoken, doe confute the errors of these, yet we will speake somewhat seuerally of them. They which affirme that mā is iustified by workes, are more easily confuted, seeing that the most manifest oracles of God doe crie out agaynst this error. David cryeth out openly: *Enter not into iudgement with thy ser-*

Diuers er-
rors in the
doctrine of
iustification.

The first er-
ror of them
which saye
that we are
iustified by
workes, with a
confutation
thereof.

Psalm. 143. 2.

A. i.

A Commentarie vpon the

uant: for in thy sight shall none that liueth be iustified. And
Gal. 3. 10. *Paul* Rom. 3. Therefore by the workes of the lawe shal no
 fleshe be iustified. And to the Galath. As manye as are of
 the workes of the lawe, are vnder the curse. Agayne: If
Gal. 2. 21. righteousnesse be by the lawe, then Christ died without a
 cause. Their opinion therefore is manifestly false, which
 affirme that a man is iustified, that is, made iust by
 workes. But we acknowledge with James, that good
 workes are required to the declaring of this iustification,
 that the good tree may be knowne by it fruites, neyther
 is there any disagreeing betweene *Paul* and James.
 For when *Paul* sayth that a mā is not iustified by workes,
 he signifieth that he is not made iust and without fault be-
 fore God by workes. When James sayth that men are
 iustified by workes, he meaneth that men are by workes
 declared to be iust. But the saying of them hath somewhat
 a fayrer shewe, which affirme that the righteousnesse
 whereby the wicked man is iustified before God, doth con-
 sist of fayth and workes together. For they saye that fayth
 is the beginning of righteousnesse, and workes the per-
 fection thereof, whose error *S. Paul* confuteth by these
 reasons. Rom. 10. I beare them recorde that they haue the
 Zeale of God, but not according to knowledge. For they being
 ignorant of the righteousnes of God, and going about to sta-
 blishe their owne righteousnes, haue not submitted them-
 selues to the righteousnes of God. For Christ is the ende of
 the lawe for righteousnes vnto euerye one that beleueth.
 Here *Paul* maketh this to be the cause of the casting of
 of the Jewes, for that they woulde ioyne their owne righ-
 teousnesse with the righteousnesse of God which is by
 fayth, and of both ioyned together make one forme of
 righteousnesse. Also Rom. 11. he reasoneth thus: If it be
 of grace, it is no more of workes, or else were grace no more
 grace: but if it be of workes, it is no more grace, or else were
 worke no more worke. *Paul* here first letteth downe two
 contrarie

The seconde
 error of them
 which affirme
 that wee are
 iustified by
 fayth and
 workes togi-
 ther, and the
 same cofuted.

Verse. 6.

contrarie propositions without any meane betwene them: If election and saluation be of workes, it is not of grace: If it be of grace, it is not of workes, bicause that debt and gift are so contrarie, that neither of them may rightly be sayde one of the other, or both of them of any thirde. Eytther therefore we are iustified and saued by fayth alone, or by workes: but the testimonies before alledged doe proue that no man is iustified by workes. Agayne, if christian righteousnesse did consist of fayth and workes togither, the reasoning of Paule were sonde and bayne. Rom. 4. To him that worketh, the wages is not counted by fauour but by debt: but to him that worketh not, but beleueth in him that iustificieth the vngodly, his fayth is counted for righteousnesse. Here Paule maketh two sortes of righteousnesse, which differ the one from the other. For they haue contrarie causes. For the righteousnesse of fayth, by which he that beleueth is iustified, is imputed and giuen freely, but the righteousnesse of workes is not free. Furthermore, if one part is to be attributed to fayth, the other part to workes in the iustification of man, two absurdities should followe thereof: one that the promise shoulde be made vncertaine which ought to be certaine. Another, that the satisfaction of Christ coulde not suffice, except it were established by our workes. Wherefore we embrace the saying of Augustine, which sayth: It is grace in no poynt, except it be free in all poyntes. But the occasion of the errour of the Papistes was a philosophicall imagination, which knoweth no righteousnesse except it be a certayne qualitie in vs. For it vnderstandeth not that a man may be iustified by the imputation of the righteousnesse of another.

Nowe let vs come to essentiall righteousnesse, concerning which first it is to be vnderstand, þ we are in no wise righteous before God by þ essentiall righteousnes of God, but in respect of the principall efficient cause. For the formal righteousnesse, by which we are righteous before

I.ii.

God,

Two kinds of righteousnesse.

The errour concerning iustification by fayth and workes togither, from whence it proceeded.

The thirde errour in the doctrine of iustification confuted.

A Commentarie vpon the

The obedience of Christ
is double.

Christian
righteousnes.

Three Kindes
of righteous-
nes of man.
Perfect right-
eousnes in
this lyfe.

Vnperfect
righteousnes.

Righteousnes
perfect and
absolute in
the lyfe to
come.

God, is no other than the obedience of Christ, as Paule plainly teacheth Rom. 5. By the obedience of one, many shall be made righteous. But the obedience of Christ is of two sortes, of the crosse, and of the lawe. By the obedience of the crosse (whereby he humbled himselfe, and became obedient vnto the death, euen the death of the crosse. Philip. 3.) the Lorde doth make a full satisfaction for our sinne. The obedience of the lawe he imputeth vnto vs that beleue, that by it we maye appeare righteous in the sight of God. Paule sayth that this righteousness or obedience of Christ is imputed to them that beleue, therefore it is neyther substance nor qualitie abyding in them, whereby a man is made righteous formally. Wherefore this affirmance is surely to be helde, that christian righteousness is the obedience of the sonne of God imputed to him that beleueth. But in the meane season we must also vnderstande this, that the Scripture maketh mention of three Kindes of righteousness of man, whereof one is of fayth, by which we stande before God, and this is perfect, as the obedience of Christ is perfect, neyther is it diminished or increased by the diminishing or increasynge of fayth. For the Publicane had this full and perfect as well as Peter, although the fayth of Peter was much more manifest and knowne. Another is the beginning of obedience, which is also called the righteousness of a good conscience. This is not set agaynst the wrath of God, because it is not perfect obedience of the lawe, yet it is necessary, in as much as it is the proper fruite of fayth. Another there is, which is as yet looked for, whereof Paule speaketh Galat. 5. For we through the spirite waite for the hope of righteousness through fayth. And 1. Iohn. 3. Dearly beloved, now we are the sonnes of God, but yet it doth not appeare what we shall be: and we knowe that when we shall appeare, we shall be like him: for we shall see him as he is: and euery man that hath this hope in him, purgeth himselfe

CXXV

Epistle of S. James.

31

even as he is pure. This righteousness therefore is a making of vs lyke vnto God, a dwelling of God in vs, a full fruition of God, an absolute and perfect loue. And although we must confesse, that the heartes of them that beleeue are the temples of the holy ghost, and Christ sayth Iohn. 14. If any man loue me, he will keepe my worde, and my father will loue him, and we will come vnto him, and will dwell with him: yet it doth not followe that this dwelling of God in vs is the righteousness whereby we stande before God, but it is a diuine presence in vs, by which we are renued, doe feele comfort, and begyn to approach to eternall life. Furthermore, if men were iustified here by essentiall righteousness, there shoulde be no difference betwene the righteousness by which we are righteous in this lyfe, and that by which we shall be like vnto God in all eternitie. But Paule putteth a manifest difference betwene these two. For he sayth that we haue the righteousness of sayth, nowe here in this lyfe, but that we doe looke for another righteousness, which Iohn defineth to be a framing or fashioning, whereby we shall be fashioned lyke vnto God, which fashioning shall proceede from hence, in that we shall see him as he is. Newe obedience is necessarily ioyned with sayth. For regeneration, which cannot be absent from a iustifying sayth, doth necessarily bring forth it frutes which are seene in newe obedience. For after that a man throughe the grace of regeneration is made a newe tree, he ought to bring forth newe, that is, good frutes, which Paule in his Epistle to the Philip. calleth the frutes of y righteousness of sayth. James pronounceth in his own peculiar and proper phrase that men are iustified by the same, that is, acknowledged and declared iust. This newe obedience is sometime called sanctification, which consisteth of the mortifying of the fleshe, and of the quickening of the spirit. For Paule sayth thus: Christ is made vnto vs wisdom, and righteousness, and

Newe obedience doth necessarily accompany sayth.

1. Cor. 1. 30

I.iii.

sancti-

A Commentarie vpon the

Howe Christ
is made our
wisedome,
righteousnes,
sanctification.
&c.

sanctification, and redemption. He is made our wisedome in the preaching of the Gospell. He is made our righteousness by the attonement for sinne, and imputation of righteousness. He is made our sanctification, when he giueth vs the holy ghost, which doth after a sort turne our nature, and make it, that the olde man being by little and little mortified, we maye liue after the spirite, that is, we may giue our myndes to godlynesse toward God, charitie toward our neyghbour, to holynesse of lyfe, and diligence in our vocation, briefly, that we maye submit our selues wholly to the rule of the spirit. In what man soeuer the force and vertue of this regeneration, or of this sanctification is not felt, there of necessitie sayth cannot be. For a true and a right sayth is seruent in spirite, and endeuoureth to bring forth it true fruites, and desireth nothing more than to serue God in spirit, and to abounde in all knowledge and vnderstanding. Seeing that this is in very deepe the propertie of a iustifying sayth and of regeneration: who can beare or abyde the saying of them, which with all their might in words and writings do impugn the necessitie of good workes: which truly we say are necessary, not as merits and causes of saluation. For the saying of Paul is firme and vnmoueable. *Ephe. 2.* By grace are ye saued through fayth, and that not of your selues, it is the gift of God, not of woorkes, least any man shoulde boast himselfe: but as necessarilye accompanying a iustifying sayth, and as the effectes of the spirite which doth regenerate vs. Furthermore, that the reason and maner of good workes may be the better vnderstande, I will declare in order sixe questions concerning good workes. The questions are these. The first, what workes are to be taught, and to be done. The seconde, howe they maye be done. The thirde, howe they doe please. The fourth, what are the causes of good workes. The fift, why promises are added to good workes. The sixt, because all men haue sinne,

Howe good
workes are
necessarie to
saluation.

Sixe questions
to be handled
concerning
good workes.

it

it is not without cause demanded, whose obedience doth please, and whose doth not please. When it is enquired what workes are to be taught and done, two thinges are to be weyed of vs, whoe we be, and whome he is vnto whom obedience is to be giuen by workes. When we beholde our selues considering our owne corruption, we are admonished that we our selues doe not imagine workes by which we thinke to worship God. For by our selues we do not vnderstand, what eyther pleaseth or displeaseth God, and the Lorde pronounceth that he is worshipped in bayne with the commaundements of men: Let vs therefore certaynly thinke that workes, albeit sayre and goodly, which haue bene inuented of men, are in no wise good.

But if we consider God, we are admonished of reuerence toward him, whereby it commeth to passe that we thinke that that onely pleaseth him, which he prescribeth in his word. For he onely is our law giuer. Ezechiel comprehendeth both in chap. 20. walke ye not in the ordinances of your fathers, neyther obserue their maners, nor defile your selues with their Idols, I am the Lord your God: walke in my statutes, and keepe my iudgements and doe them. Also, 33. I haue made thee a watchman vnto the house of Israel: therefore thou shalt heare the word at my mouth, and admonish them from me. Hereof therefore it manifestly followeth that no other workes are to be taught and done but those which are commended vnto vs by the word of God.

After that the mind of the godly man knoweth, what workes are to be done forth with, it inquireth how they may be done. The dissoluing of this question is to be taken out of two sayinges of the Scripture. The Apostle sayth to the Hebr. without fayth it is vnpossible to please God. And Christ sayth: without me can ye doe nothing. Wherefore these thinges are required in order. First, the knowledge of Christ. Secondly trust and confidence in Christ.

I.iii.

Christ,

The first question what good workes are to be taught and done.

Such workes are to be taught and done, as God hath commended to vs in his worde.

The seconde question. How those workes which God hath prescribed, may be done. Heb. 11. 6. Iohn. 15. 5.

A Commentarie vpon the

Christ. Thirdly diuification, whereby Christ doth quicken vs by the Gospell, and poureth his holy spirite vpon vs. Herevnto maketh y^e saying of Esay, chap. 40. But they that wait vpon the Lord shall renue their strength: they shall lift vp the wings as the Eagles: they shall runne, and not be wearie, and they shall walke and not faint. For there can be no loue, no obedience, except mercy and reconciliation for the mediators sake be first apprehended. In this consolation the diuinitie doth dwell in the heart. For the eternall father is effectually in deede by his sonne which comforteth by the voyce of the Gospell, and the holpe Ghost is giuen of the father and the Sonne which stirreth vp in vs ioye and calling vpon God, according to these sayings: I will poure vpon them the spirite of grace and compassion, &c. And in Iohn: We will come vnto him and dwell with him. 2. Cor. 3. We beholding the glory of the Lord with open face, are changed into the same image, that is, we beholding the word which is the image of the eternall father, and in consolatiō doth shew the presence and goodness of God, are made like vnto his image, the holy Ghost inflaming our hearts.

Zach. 12. 10.

Iohn. 14. 23.

The thirde
question how
good workes
which are
done of vs do
please God.

After that the mind is taught how good workes may be done, it inquireth furthermore how they please, for they are done in bayne, except they please. Scipio fighteth for his countrey, Dauid also fighteth, but the workes of both of them doe not please God. It is fitly therefore demaunded, how good workes may please. To the which question we aunswere in generall, that they please in the regenerate. The workes of Scipio did not please because he was not regenerate. But the warfare of Dauid did please because Dauid was accepted by fayth. But here are three thinges to be considered in order. First we must certainly thinke concerning the person, that he is reconciled by fayth and iust for Christes sake freely. Then we must confesse that the person iustified by fayth, cannot as yet sa-
cisse

Epistle of S. James.

33

tillie the lawe. For many inward sinnes doe abide and
 sticke euen in the Godly. This uncleannesse is to be la-
 mented and doubts and euil affections are to be resisted
 and striven against, and also we ought to pray with true
 sighes of the heart, that God will not impute vnto vs this
 filthines wherein we are wrapped. Thirdly, although we
 acknowledge this our filthines, notwithstanding we must
 certaynly thinke that God doth require a certayne vnper-
 fect obedience in vs, & that this vnperfect obedience doth
 please for Christs sake. For so Peter doth playnly teach :
 Offer vp spirituall sacrifices acceptable to God by Iesus
 Christ, which is our reconciliation and now maketh interces-
 sion for vs. Our obedience therefore doth not please God
 for the worthines or perfection thereof. For by it selfe it
 is unworthy to come into the sight of God, neyther doth
 it fulfill the law, as it is sayd, but it pleaseth bicause of the
 person reconciled, which for Christs sake is counted righ-
 teous : so also doth he please, although he carie about in
 the flesh sinne and great infirmitie. Seing it is euident
 that a man is in no wise iustified by workes : it may fit-
 ly also may be demaunded, what are the causes of good
 workes by which men ought to be stirred vp and pricked
 forward to worke well. There are numbred thre moost
 weyghthy causes, necessitie, dignitie, and reward.

How our obe-
 dience plea-
 seth God.

Three speciall
 causes which
 ought to
 moue vs to
 doe good
 workes.

Fiue kindes
 of necessitie
 which ought
 much to stirre
 vs vp vnto
 the doing of
 good workes.

Necessitie may be made to be of five sorts : of y^e coman-
 demēt, of worship, of det, of holding fast y^e sayth, of auoy-
 ding punishmēt, & of cōuersion or regeneratiō. Necessitie
 of the commaudemēt is, bicause God doth seriously and
 seuerely commaund obedience toward his lawe. Keepe
 mine ordinances sayth he, and walke therein, & Paul sayth : Leuit. 18. 4.
 This is the will of God euen your sanctification. Necessity 1. Theff. 4. 3.
 of dette or dutie that we owe is declared Rom. 8. We are
 debtors not to the flesh but to the spirite, for we are not our
 owne, but his that hath redemed vs with his bloud. Necessi-
 tie of holding fast the sayth is commaunded to vs of

R.t.

Paule;

A Commentarie vpon the

1. Timo. 5. 8.

1. Timo. 1. 18.
19.

Ezech. 33. 11.

The second
speciall cause
which ought
to moue vs to
worke well.

John. 1. 12.

2. Pet. 1. 16.

The third spe-
ciall cause
which ought
to stirre vs vp
to good
workes.

Paule. If there be any that prouideth not for his owne, and namely for them of his housholde, he denieth the fayth, and is worse than an infidel. And agayne: Fight a good fight, hauing fayth and a good conscience, neyther of which is kept while we giue our selues to sinne. Necessitie of auoyding punishment is confirmed by the testimonie of Dauid. For iniquitie, sayth he, thou dost chastice the children of men. Necessitie of conuersion is affirmed in this saying: As I liue, sayth the Lord God, I desire not the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turne from his waye and liue. When therefore conuersion is made, man is also quickened by fayth through the holy Ghost. Moreover, vnto conuersion is ioined regeneration, which is a beginning of a newe lyfe, a newe light, wisdom, righteousnesse, and a renning of the image of God in vs.

The seconde cause is dignitie, which consisteth in this, that the man conuerted or regenerate, is now the sonne of God, according to that saying: He gaue power to be the sonnes of God to them that beleue in his name. Howe great a dignitie is it, that they which beleue, are the temple of the holy ghost liuing: that Christ dwelleth in them by fayth: that the Father, the Sonne, and the holy Ghost, doe come vnto them, and will dwell with them: that they are the members of Christ. On the contrarie, wey what a wickednes it is for the children of God to resemble the image of the enimie: howe great a daunger it is, that the temple of God shoulde be polluted with the filthinesse of Satan, what a cruell thing it is to driue God out of his dwelling place. Wherefore it becommeth the children of God to imitate their heauenly father, which sayth: Be ye holy, for I am holy. Herevpon Paule sayeth that we are called to sanctification, and not to uncleannes.

The thirde cause is a rewarde, that is, a recompence of the pacience and obedience of them that beleue. This rewarde is not giuen for the worthinesse of the worke, but for

Epistle of S. James.

34

for the promise of grace. Seing that the good workes that are done of the godly, are the bounden duties of seruants, and vnperfect and defiled: it may be demaunded why God hath added promises to good workes. And there may be numbrd fve causes hereof. The first, that they may be testimonies of the prouidence of God. For God will haue it knowne that good things pertainyng to the bodye, are created of him, and are not spreade abroade by chaunce, but are of him giuen to the Church, and preserved according to the saying: *He is thy life and the length of thy dayes, in the dayes of hunger they shall be satisfied, the rich haue suffered hunger, but no good thing shall be wanting to him that feareth the Lorde.* The seconde, that they may be testimonies, that God will, yea euen in this lyfe keepe and preserve his Church. Wherefore Paule sayth *I. Tim. 4. Godlynesse hath the promise of the lyfe present, and of that that is to come.* Bicause God will of his infinite goodnesse gather his Church for his sonnes sake the mediatour, he keepeth this order of nature, he maketh the earth fruitefull, that he may feede and nourishe his Church euen in this life, and bicause for his Churches sake he doth feede also the rest, it becommeth vs especially to be thankful. The thirde, bicause God will haue corporall necessitie to be a monishment & warning concerning fayth, prayer, hope, giuing of thanks: therefore hath he set forth his promises, & wil haue these good things to be asked & looked for by fayth, & by this asking and looking for he will haue fayth, hope and pacience to increase. The fourth, that they may be warnings of the promise of grace, bicause that fayth which acknowledgeth the sonne, and receyueth reconciliation, ought alwayes to go before in the asking of corporall things, and for the sonnes sake the other promises were set forth and ratified. All these things are comprehended in the saying: *Whatsoever he shall aske the father in my name, he will giue it you.* The fift, bicause God

Five causes
wherefore
God hath added
promises
to good
workes.

The first.

The seconde.

The third.

The fourth.

Ioh. 15. 16.

The fift.

R. ii.

will

A Commentarie vpon the

will haue both these things to be knowne, both that the Church is subiect to the crosse, and yet notwithstanding that it is marueylously preserved in this lyfe, euen among perils and daungers, that all the maruapulous preseruations of the Church, and al the wonderfull deliuerances of the same, may be testimonies of the presence of God in his Church, as it is sayde Num. 14. *That the Egyptians maye knowe, that thou, O Lorde art among this people.* Iosu. 3. *Ye shall knowe that the Lorde God is in the midst of you.* 1. Kings. 17. *That all the earth may knowe, that there is a God in Israel.* Esay. 37. *Nowe O Lorde our God, saue thou vs out of the hande of Zenacherib, that all the kingdomes of the earth may knowe, that thou onely art the Lorde.* Seeing that al men haue sinne, it is rightly demaunded, whose obedience doth please, and whose doth not please. To this question I doe aunswere thus: Sinnes are of two sorts: some are committed of them which know and are willing agaynst their conscience, such sinnes are not in them that beleue. For if he that beleueth, doth fall agaynst his conscience, he doth as it were shake of the holy ghost, renounce the fayth, and is made guiltie of the wrath of God, and except he repenteth, he falleth headlong into eternal punishment. Moreover they, which being deceyued by the delusions of the deuill, doe reuolt from the foundation, that is, doe renounce and forsake any article of the fayth, whether they vnderstande it, or vnderstande it not, doe cease to be holy, doe shake of the holy ghost, and become guiltie of eternal wrath and displeasure, as Cherinthus, Ebion, Arius, Fotinus, and such lyke heretikes. Other some sinnes are not committed agaynst the conscience, as blindness, and ignorance, doubting, many omittings of our dutie, and vicious affections, agaynst which euilles the godlye doe strue, and doe beleue that they are put away for the mediators sake. Although this uncleannesse is in the godly, yet they doe please God for the mediators sake, receiuing by

Two generall
sorts of sinnes

What follo-
weth sinne a-
gaynst the
conscience.

The sinnes of
the godly.

Epistle of S. James.

35

by fayth forgiveness of their sinnes, according to that saying: Blessed are they whose sinnes are covered. And Paule Psal. 32.7. sayth: If ye mortifye the deedes of the flesh by the spirite, Rom. 8.13. ye shall live. These things I thought good to speake more at large concerning true and wholesome repentance, and the partes thereof, that the maner of true repentance or turning unto God, may be plainly vnderstande of euery one, and the order of the partes of repentance may be considered, that that which is proper to euery of them may be giuen vnto it, that we doe not confounde the properties of the partes, that we may vnderstande that iustification and saluation is free, that we may not depriue fayth of it properties. Briefly, that we being iustified by fayth freely for Christes sake, may giue to God his glorie and worship, and exercise our selues in all kindes of good works whiles that we shall be strangers in this lyfe, which a full and perfecte redemption through Christ our only sauour shall follow, to whome be prayse for ever. Amen.

Chap. 3.

The summe of the thirde

Chapter.

AS he perswadeth that none doe rashly vsurpe vnto himselfe authoritie of maistership & gouernment, but rather that he bridle his owne tongue: so he requireth that wisdom be shewed by modest conuersation, rather than by contention and enuie, whereof many mischiefes doe come.

The order and partes of the
thirde Chapter.

THERE are two partes of this Chapter: the first concerning maistership not to be rashly vsurped ouer other, but rather that the tongue is to be bridled. The second of the vse of wisdom and giftes without enuie and contention. Either part bath it reasons by which it is proued.

K.iii.

The

*A Commentarie vpon the
The exposition of the third
Chapter with an obseruation of the
Doctrinne.*

¶ My brethren be not many maisters.



The meaning of this proposition considered by it selfe is doubtfull, but if it be restrayned, as it needes must be, to the reasons by which the proposition is confirmed, the meaning is easie. Seeing therefore that all the reasons whiche are afterwarde added, doe contayne the discommodities of an intemperate tongue, we must of necessitie here take maisters for them, which take vnto them selues authoritie to resourne and censure others, and doe seuerly and rigorously call other mens deedes vnto examination, and in the meane season doe not see there owne faultes. He doth not therefore condemne here brotherly admonition, which proceedeth of fayth and loue, which hath the commandement of Christ, and is the foundation of Ecclesiasticall discipline: but he condemneth the lightnes, ambition and pride of them, which doe not so much regarde edifying, as they doe giue them selues to sleaude and backbite. Christ sayth: *Matth. 23.* Be not ye called Rabbi: for one is your maister, to wit, Christ, and all ye are brethren And call no man your father vpon the earth, for there is but one your father which is in heauen. &c. If any contende vpon these wordes, that it is not lawfull for any godly man to take vpon him the title of maister or teacher: A obiection agaynst him the forbidding of the name of a father. For here we are no lesse prohibited to be called fathers then maisters. Therefore as it is not simply forbidden to be called fathers, but in this or that respect: so neither are we simply forbidden to be called maisters or teachers.

This

¶ What the Apostle condemneth in the former wordes.

The names of maisters and teachers are not taken away by the words of James,

Epistle of S. James. 36

This meaning therfore is to be considered. Christ doth not esteeme by what name or title thou art called, so as thou abidest vnder his gouernment, and maintaynest brotherly concord without ambition and contempt of others. Paule calleth himselfe the maister and teacher of the Gentils, yet he hath not broken this commaundement of Christ, but rather obeyed it. For his maistership did tende vnto this ende, that he might bring all vnder the gouernment and rule of Christ. They therfore which eyther vpon the wordes of James or the prohibition of the Lorde doe condemne scholasticall promotions, doe mistake and fallshly apply the Scripture, and appayze and diminish the profitable gouernment of a common wealch concerning learning. Let ambition be farre from vs, let vs submit oure selues to the maistership and gouernement of Christ, and let vs reuerently retayne and keepe scholasticall order.

Knovving that vve shall receiue the greater condemnation.

The first reason is taken of punishment: they which are ready to condemne others, who notwithstanding them selues, are in the same fautes or greater, doe prouoke the wrath of God agaynst themselves. For seing that loue doth couer a multitude of sinnes, and they are desirous to discouer the sinnes of others, they doe sufficiently declare, that they are boyde of loue.

2 For in many thinges vve sinne all.

The second reason taken of our common imbecillitie and weaknes. For our common infirmitie and readines to sin ought to admonish vs that we be not ouer rigorous agaynst others. The chiefe causes of our falling into sinne are these, 1. Sin dwelling or abiding in vs. 2. The manifold craftes and assaults of the deuill. 3. The examples of the greatest part of the worlde, and those exceeding euill. 4. Negligence of gouernours of maners and discipline, as in parents, ministers of the Gospell and ciuill rulers.

K.iiii.

If

The greatest causes which moue men to sinne so often as they doe.

A Commentarie vpon the

If any man sinne not in vword, he is a perfect man,
and able to bridle all the body.

The third reason taken of the profite of a bridled tongue.
He that can temper his tongue is a perfect man, that is
vpright or entire, and endued with many other vertues.
Therefore he that doth vse his tongue unruly and disho-
nestly is no whit vpright or entire: for he is polluted
with many vices. Therefore we must not rashly take vn-
to vs authoritie to iudge and reſourme the maners of o-
thers.

3 Behold vve put bittes into the horses mouthes, that
they should obey vs, and vve turne about all theyr
body.

4 Behold also the shippes, vvhich though they be so
great, and are driuen of fierce vvindes, yet are they
turned about vvith a very smal rudder, vvhicherso-
euer the gouernour listeth.

5 Euen so the tongue is a little member, and boa-
steth of great things.

The tongue
is compared
to the bit of a
bridle, and to
the rudder of
a ship.

The fourth reason likewise is taken of the profit and com-
moditie of a well ordered tongue. For as a bitte put into
the horses mouth, doth turne about all the body of the
horse, and as the rudder of a ship doth guide the whole
ship: so a well ordered tongue boasteth of great thinges,
that is, it bringeth to passe great matters, and doth as it
were direct the whole man into the way of perfection:
when as contrariwise a disordered and an unruly tongue
is like to a bitte that is lewse, and a rudder that is set at
libertie.

Behold howv great a thing a little fire kindleth.

6 And the tongue is a fire, yea a vvorld of vvickednes:
so is the tongue set among our members, that it de-
fileth the vvhole body, and setteth on fire the course
of nature, and it is set on fire of hel.

The fift reason taken of the discommodities of an unbrid-
led

led and an unruly tongue. As, sayth he, a little fire dooth with burning consume the whole wood: so the litle tongue is as it were the kindling of many vices, which although it be but small, yet it is a world of iniquitie that is, a gathering together of an heape of all wickednes, as therfore in a little fire there is powre to kindle the whole wood: so in the small tongue, there is power to defile the whole body of man, and to set on fire the course of nature, when as it selfe is first set on fire of hell. But what is the course of nature, and what is it for the tongue to be set on fire of hell? As the course of nature is the world it selfe: so the tongue to be set on fire of hell is as much, as to be breathed vpon of Satan himselfe, whereby it is made a fit instrument to stirre by all mischief in the worlde. Whereunto may be referred that saying of *Menander*: the tongue is the cause of many euills. How true this is the tongue of *Mahomet* and other heretikes doth witness.

The discomforts which arise of an unruly and an vntemperate tongue.

7 For the vvhole nature of beastes and of birdes, and of creeping thinges, and thinges of the sea is tamed and hath bene tamed of the nature of man:

8 But the tongue can no man tame, it is an unruly euil. The first reason taken from a comparison: beastes bydes, and fishes of the sea may be tamed, but the tongue that is vnbriided and accustomed to speak ill, can by no meanes be tamed. It is therfore an exceeding great euill. Wherefore we must most diligently take heede, that we doe not giue it to much libertie.

A hard thing to rule the tongue, and therefore it must be bridled in time.

Full of deadly poyson.

9 Therewith blesse vve God even the father, & therewith curse vve men, vvhich are made after the similitude of God.

10 Out of one mouth procedeth blessing and cursing. The seventh reason taken of the wonderfull inconstancie of the venimous tongue. For it sayneeth y it blesseth God, and by and by it curseth him in his image, then which

L.i.

wicked

A Commentarie vpon the

wickednes what can be greater :

My brethren, these things ought not so to be.

The eyght reason taken of an inconuenience : this disorder of the tongue and reprochfull speaking doth not become Christians, wherefore it is especially to be auoyded.

11 Doth a fountaine sende forth at one place swete vvater and bitter?

12 Can the fig tree, my brethren, bring forth oliues, eyther a vyne figges? so can no fountayne make both salt vvater and swete.

Impossible it
is for a tongue
accustomed to
speake yll, to
vttre that
which is good
& vndeiled.

The ninth reason taken of that which is vnpossible. As it is vnpossible that a fountayne should be able to sende forth at one place swete water and bitter. For that can no more be, than that a figge tree should be able to bring forth olyues, or a vine figges: so it can not be, that that tongue which is giuen to euil speaking and sclandering, should be able to bring forth any good thing not defiled wth the venim of the tongue & the heart. Wherefore seing that it is so, let euery one applie his tongue only to speak well, which will be counted godly & among the children of God. Wherefore let no man rashly vsurpe vnto himselfe authoritie to controll and finde fault with others.

13 VVho is a vwise man, and endued vvith knowledge among you? let him shewe by good conuersation his vvorkes, in meekenesse of vvisedom.

Hitherto he hath beaten downe the statelynesse of proude controllers of other, and hath with firme reasons bydoled the vneulinnesse and saucinesse of the tongue. Now becauise this euill did procede of an opinion of wisedome, he commendeth the true moderation of wisedome, and teacheth the vse thereof in our lyfe and conuersation. The propo-

True vvifdom
will shewe it
selfe by honest
conuersation.

sition is this: He that is endued with true wisedome and knowledge, let him shewe it by the vvorkes of an honest and meeke conuersation, as by the true and continuall fruites

fruites thereof.

14 But if ye haue bitter enuying and strife in your heartes, reioyce not, neyther be lyers agaynst the truth.

The first reason of the proposition taken of disagreeing or contrarie effects. He which is full of bitter enuying & contention, doth boast in bayne that he is a wise man. For these wicked affections are contrarie to the nature of true wisdom, which loueth honestie and meekenesse. To be a lyer agaynst the truth in this place, is falsly to vsurpe vnto himselfe the name of wisdom.

A man cannot be full of enuy and strife, and also wise.

15 This wisdom descendeth not from aboue, but is earthly, sensuall, and deuillish.

The seconde reason of contrarie causes. Wisdom which with bitternesse of mynde, and desire of contention are ioynded, is earthly, sensuall, and deuillish: Therefore it is not true wisdom. For true wisdom is heavenly, spirituall, and diuine. James in this place doth not condemne naturall wisdom, which is the good gyft of God by it selfe, whereof he maketh here no mention, but he condemneth the wicked affections of men, and the bayne boasting of diuine wisdom.

Contention and true wisdom can not stande together.

16 For vwhere enuying and strife is, there is sedition, and all maner of euill vvorkes.

The thirde reason of the discommoditie of enuy and contention, which followe a bayne opinion of wisdom. Experience doth sufficiently proue, that when men are full of bitter emue, and desirous of contention, the gate is open to them vnto sedition and all wickednes, wherof Germanie being afflicted at this day, hath to much experience.

Emue & strife open the gate to sedition & wickednesse.

17 But the wisdom that is from aboue, is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, easie to be entreated, full of mercie and good fruites, vvithout iudging, and vvithout hypocrisie.

The fourth reason taken of things annexed or ioynded vnto

Lii.

to

88 *A Commentarie vpon the*

An excellent
comparing
together of
earthly and
heavenly wis-
dom, wherein
is shewed
howe the one
differeth from
the other.

to true and heavenly wisdom. Which things we will
Declare by setting one contrarie agaynst the other. Earth-
ly wisdom is corrupted with affections: heavenly wise-
dome is pure, undefiled, and not polluted with affections.
Earthly wisdom is desirous of contention: heavenly wise-
dome is peaceable, that is, diligent to make peace and
quietnesse among men. Earthly wisdom is rigorous
and cruell: heavenly wisdom is gentle, and giueth place
to rigour. Earthly wisdom will yeelde to no man: hea-
venly wisdom is tractable, and doth easily obey him that
commaundeth those things that be good and right. Earth-
ly wisdom is vnnmercifull: heavenly wisdom is merci-
full, and full of good fruites. Earthly wisdom doth ac-
cept persons omitting the cause: heavenly wisdom doth
in no case regarde the persons, but the causes. Earthly
wisdom hath hypocrisie ioynd with it: heavenly wise-
dome is voyde of all hypocrisie.

18 And the fruite of righteousness is sown in peace, of
them that make peace.

The vse of
wisdom and
all other good
gifts receyued
of God.

The first reason taken of the fruite, which commeth vnto
them that vse wisdom and other giftes of God peaceably
vnto edifying, also he teacheth a generall rule concerning
the vse, not only of wisdom, but also of other giftes. For
he will haue vs vse both wisdom and other giftes as the
fruites of righteousness peaceably vnto edifying, which
if we shall doe, we shall at the length ioyfully reape the
fruites of our righteousness.

Chap 4.

The summe of the fourth

Chapter.

*AS the Apostle exhorteth them, that vnlawfull lustes
from whence contentions doe come, and humane de-
sires being excluded, they doe cleaue vnto God, and liue ra-
ther*

Epistle of S. James. 39

they in mourning the in the vaine ioy of the world: so he doth earnestly admonish them, that laying asyde backbiting and speaking euill one of another, they presume to doe nothing rashly.

The order and partes of the
fourth Chapter.

Although the scope and drift of this Chapter is one, that the faythfull doe not any thing conetously, deceitfully and rashly, following their owne lustes and desires, yet I make foure partes hereof, that the first may be a sharpe debortation from the desire of priuate things thowrow lustes and concupiscence, from whence many mischiefs doe spring, wherunto is added a confirmation. In the second is set forth counsayle or remedie agaynst the fire of lustes. The thirde is a dissuasion from the desire of backbiting and condemning other. The fourth is a correction of rashe presumption in the purposing and doing of things.

The fourth
Chapter con-
sisteth of four
Partes.

The exposition of the fourth

Chapter with an obseruation of the
Doctrinne.

- 1 From vvhence are vvarres and contentions among you? are they not hence, euen of your pleasures that fight in your members?



It sheweth that the lustes of the minde are the fountayne of all contention and mischief among men, by the which men are caried to desire those thinges which they iudge acceptable and pleasaunt vnto them selues. When he sayth that pleasures doe fight in the members, he hath relation to the kingdome of originall sinne, which is sayde of the Apostle Paul then to reigne, when we doe obey it through the lustes thereof, which are as it were certayne souldiers of it. These he sayth, doe fight in the members, bicause the members of

How men are
led to sinne
through the
lustes of their
own mindes.

L.iii.

the

A Commentarie vpon the

the body are instruments by the which sinne that dwelleth in vs, doth finish it worke, and which allso men doe vse to commit wickednes. The summe of the whole matter is this: The fountayne of concupiscence is originall sinne, passive concupiscence which is unwilling is stirred vp and prouoked of originall sinne, and that by the ministerie eyther of the sense or of the complexion, or of the memorie. The will is moued to consent, whereof ariseth active concupiscence which is willing. To this nowe bearing rule the members of the body are obedient, and doe prepare them selues to doe the worke, which when it is done, originall sinne is sayde to reigne and concupiscence to fight, obeying the tyranne sinne, and vsing the members of the body as instruments in their fight. But that this be not done Paule forbiddeth when he sayth. *Let not sinne reigne therefore in your mortall bodie, that ye should obey it in the lustes thereof.*

Rom. 6. 12.

2 Ye lust and haue not, ye enuie and desire immoderately, and cannot obtayne: ye fight and vvarre and get nothing, because ye aske not.

3 Ye aske and receiue not, bicause ye aske amisse, that ye might laye the same out on your pleasures.

He liuely describeth the wicked motions and trauayle of them, which endeouour greedily to increase their substance, that they may prouide for their pleasures. They lust after those things that are ocher mens, they enuie them which haue, they desire immoderately, that is, they doe maruelously couet, and are vehemently caried, they doe earnestly followe contentions, that by right and wrong they may obtayne those things which they desire. Sometime also they call vpon God by prayer, but in vayne, bicause they aske amisse, euen those things which woulde turne to their owne destruction if they shoulde receyue them. We see howe aptly he doth here describe the carefulnesse of couetous men in doing their businesse.

The inordinate carefulnesse of couetous men described.

Epistle of S. James. 40

4 Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the
amitie of the vworld is the enimitie of God? VVho
soeuer therefore vwill be a friende of the vworld, ma-
keth himselfe the enemie of God.

The first reason of the proposition whereby he confuteth
the peruerse opinion of them, which woulde both be god-
ly, and also followe the pleasures of this worlde: but he
sheweth that it is vnpossible for that to be. For one thing
pleaseth God, another thing pleaseth the worlde, and
God and the worlde doe commaunde things cleane con-
trarie. Seing therefore that euery one must be eyther a
friende of the worlde and an enemie of God, or a friende of
God, and an enemie of the worlde, it is meete that euery
one, which desireth to be a Christian, doe renounce the
friendship of the worlde, that is, the wicked lustes therof,
and cleaue vnto God, and obey him. This place agreeth
with that saying of Christ: No man can serue two maisters. Math. 6. 24.

VVe can not
serue two
maisters, we
can not please
both God and
the worlde.

Hereof it is manifest, that many at this daye doe boast of
the name of Christians, which in deede are prophane eni-
mies of God, and abhominable before God. Tit. 1. They
professe that they knowe God, but by workes they denie him,
and are abhominable and disobedient, and vnto euery good
worke reprobate. Finally he calleth here adulterers and a-
dulteresses forsakers of God, in as much as they leauing
God, to whome they ought to cleaue as vnto a husbände,
doe ioyne themselves vnto other louers.

Spirituall ad-
ulterers.

5 Doe ye thinke that the Scripture saith in vayne: The
spirit that dwelleth in vs lusteth after enuie?

He proueth that friendshippe cannot stande betweene the
worlde and God, and that by the testimonie of the Scrip-
ture, which testimonie, although in these wordes it is not
founde in the Bibles, yet as much as appertayneth to the
sense thereof, it commeth very often. For it agreeth with
that saying, Genes. 6. God sawe that all the imaginations of
the thoughtes of mans heart were onely euill continuallye.

L.iii.

And

4 Ye

A Commentarie vpon the

The heart and thoughts of the vnregenerate are euill continually.

And with that Genes. 8. The imagination of mans heart is euill, euen from his youth. By these testimonies is signified, that men which are not regenerate, are caried headlong vnto euill, which being it is contrarie to God, who is most gracious and good, who doth both will and also thinke those thinges that be good: it cannot otherwise be, but that there should be a certayne enimitie of the world and of God.

6 But the Scripture offereth more grace and therefore sayth: God resisteth the proude, and giueth grace to the humble.

To whome God giueth his grace.

The second reason is taken of a reward. God hath promised to the humble, that is to the poore in spirite, and to them that despise the vaine lustes of the world, grace, which is better then all the delites and riches of the world. Let Christians therefore seeke this rather, then that fauour of the world and the pleasures thereof, which the proude doe diligently seeke after. But as he giueth grace to the humble: so he resisteth the proude as a most sore and grievous enemy.

7 Submit your selues to God: resist the deuill and he vwill flee from you.

What it is to submit himselfe to God.
To resist the deuill.

Now he teacheth remedies against the euill of lust or concupiscence. To submit himselfe to God, is to set before himselfe the word of God as a rule of his life, and according to it to submit himselfe in all obedience. To resist the deuill, is to stricke agaynst unlawfull lustes, which are the instruments of Satan, by the which he draweth men vnto destruction. To this he addeth a promise: And he vwill flee from you, that is, he will not hurt you, he will not ouerthrow you with his subtleties and delusions.

8 Draw neare to God, and he vwill draw neare to you. cleanse you handes, ye sinners, and purge your heartes, ye double minded.

He commandeth and promiseth. He commandeth that we

Epistle of S. James.

41

We draw neare vnto God, to wit, by fayth and true obedience. For as he is sayd to depart from God which doth abandon and giue himselſe to the lufteſ of the worlde, by which he draweth neare vnto the deuill: ſo he which departeth from theſe, is ſayd to draw neare vnto God. He promiſeth when he ſayth: And he vwill draw neare vnto you. This promiſe is grounde vpon the continuall loue of God towards mankind, whereby he deſireth not the death of a ſinner. He doth here call them ſinners, which exerciſe manifeſt impietie, and them double minded, which ſayde in wordes, that they did worſhip God, and in the meane ſeaſon do follow their owne luſts and concupiſcence.

VWho is ſayde to draw nere vnto God and who to drawe nere vnto the deuell.

9 Suffer afflictions and ſorowve ye, and vveepe: Let your laughter be turned into mourning, and your ioy into heauines.

He ſetteth this agaynſt the pleaſures of them, which follow their owne luſtes, and laugh and reioyce in them. For it becommeth the godly rather to mourne and ſuffer affliction, and ſo to be aſhamed for the ſinnes which they haue committed, that they caſt their countenance downe to the earth for ſhame. For that the greeke word ſignifieth, which y^e Apoſtle here uſeth.

VVe muſt not reioyce in our owne luſtes, but be aſhamed for our ſinne.

10 Caſt downe your ſelues before the Lorde, and he vwill liſt you vp.

Bicauſe the godly are contēned and diſpiſed in the worlde, the Apoſtle doth encourage theē, & bid theē remaine in that ſubiection, whereby they are ſubiection to God in true feare: alſo he doth comfort theē, when he ſaith, y^e it wil come to paſſe that God at the length will liſt them vp, and wipe away the teares from their face. For by the word of liſting vp is ſignified comfort agaynſt the ſorrow of this preſent life, and deliuerance from all the miſeries and troubles of this life.

Though the godly be long caſt downe, yet the Lorde at length will raiſe them vp and comfort them.

11 Speake not euil one of another, brethren. He that

ſpea-

ſpea-

A Commentarie vpon the

speaketh euill of his brother, or he that condemneth his brother, speaketh euill of the law and condemneth the law: & if thou condemnest the law, thou arte not an obseruer of the law, but a iudge.

He doth againe repress the intemperance of the tongue in accusing and condemning other, adding a most strong reason taken of the grievousnes of the deed. No man ought to speake against the law and condemne it. He that speaketh agaynst his brother and condemneth him, speaketh against the law, and condemneth it. Therefore no man ought to speake against his brother and condemne him. The *Minor* or second proposition of the argumēt he proueth, because he that condemneth the law, is not an obseruer of the law, but a iudge. Now, to condemne the law, is to reiect the authoritie thereof, and to challenge vnto himselfe that right which is due to the law, and so to peruert the order of thinges. For it is the office of the lawe to prescribe a rule of life, and to iudge of those thinges that are done. But it is the dutie of man to submit himselfe to the authoritie of the lawe, and to obserue it. But he which doth the contrarie, that is, he that vsurpeth authoritie to iudge and censure others, doth with sacrilege challenge that to himselfe which is proper to the law. James in this place speaketh onely agaynst those, which of a peruerse and corrupt iudgement speake against their brethren, that they may distaine their good name, and get vnto them selues an opinion of holines: he doth not reprehend those which iudge of duetie, so as they follow the authoritie and rule of the law in iudgeing. For he that doth this, is to be sayd not so much to iudge himselfe, as to pronounce the iudgement of God, which we see James here often times to haue done.

12 There is one lawgiuer vvhich is able to saue and to destroy. VVho art thou that iudgest ā other mā? That which is proper vnto God, no man without sacrilege

¶ We must not be rash to reprove and condemne our brethren.

To condemne the law what it is.

The office of the law

All iudging of our brethren is not condemned of the Apostle

lege can blurpe vnto himselfe. It is proper vnto God to be a Lawgiuer and a Iudge, which hereby is manifest, because he only hath power to saue and to destroy. Therefore no man can take vpon him selfe this authoritie without sacrilege. James speaketh here also, as I admonished before, of rashe iudgement proceeding from a desire of deprauiing and sclaundering.

Another reason against rash iudgers of their brethren.

13 Go to now ye that say: to day or to morow we will go into such a citie, and continue there a yere, and buye and sell, and get gaine,

14 (And yet ye cannot tell what shall be to morow. For what is your life? It is euen a vapour that appeareth for a litle time, and afterwarde vanisheth away)

15 For that ye ought to say: If the Lorde will, and, if we liue, we will do this or that.

This is a correction of rashe presumption in determining vpon things to be done, and he prescribeth two conditions which he requireth in all deliberations. The first is, that we giue place to the will of God, and that we attempt nothing without calling vpon him. The cause of this condition is, for that the will of God ought to be vnto the godly a rule to worke by. The other condition is, that we doe alwayes thinke vpon the frailnesse of our lyfe, which seeing it is lyke vnto a vapour that continueth but a small time: he is vnwise, which promiseth vnto himselfe things that are to come and vncertaine: Wherefore we are admonished in this place, that we doe so behaue our selues in all our doings, that we may be ready whensoever we shall depart from hence.

Two necessarie conditions to be obserued in determining and purposing to doe things.

16 But now ye reioyce in your boastings: all such reioycing is euill.

He sheweth fro whence this presumption in doing things doth come, to wit, of an arrogant reioycing, which seeing it is euill and alwayes to be auoyded: that also which

¶ ii,

¶ xiii

A Commentarie vpon the
springeth thereof, is not without good cause to be es-
chewed.

17 Therefore to him that knoweth howe to do vvell,
and doth it not, to him it is sinne.

To sinne of
will is farre
more grieuous
then to sinne
of ignorance.

The conclusion directly brought in of that which went be-
fore shoulde be this: No man therefore of a bayne reioy-
cing ought rashly to purpose with himselfe to doe anye
thing, as though the euent or falling out thereof did lye in
his owne handes. But in the place of this conclusion he
putteth an exaggerating or amplifying of that sin which
he reprehendeth. He sinneth more grievously, which sin-
neth willingly and knowing thereof, than he which offen-
deth of ignorance. Wherefore he cannot be excused, which
knoweth what is to be done, and howe it is to be done, and
yet doth it not.

Chap. 5.
The summe of the fift
Chapter.

AS he forbiddeth a rashe othe, and giueth counsayle to
the afflicted, hauing first sharply rebuked the rich, and
stirred vp the poore vnto patience: so he requireth pardoning
of one anothers offences, praying one for another, and dili-
gence in calling backe their brethren from going astray.

The order and partes of the
fift Chapter.

OF this Chapter there are five partes. The first is a sharpe
rebuking of the rich. The seconde, an encouraging of the
poore vnto patience. The third, a forbidding of a rash othe.
The fourth, an instruction what is to be done in diuers cases.
The fift, a commendation of mutuall duties.

The

The exposition of the fift

Chapter, with an obseruation of
the doctrine.

- 1 Goto nowveyerich men : weepe and howle for
your miseries that shall come vpon you.



He speaketh not vnto all rich men, but only vnto them, which were vnnmercifull toward the poore, and eyther abused their riches couetously, or else spent them lewdly vpon delites and pleasures. When he biddeth them weepe, he will haue them call to mynde the miseries which in time to come they shall suffer for their crueltie and couetousnesse. In these wordes therfore this proposition is contayned: Let not rich men abuse their riches vnto their own destructiō.

To what rich men the Apostle speaketh

- 2 Your riches are corrupt, and your garmentes are moth eaten.

- 3 Your golde and siluer is cankred, and the rust of the shall be a vvitness against you, and shall eate your flesh as it vvore fire. Ye haue heaped vp treasure for the last dayes.

These wordes of the Apostle containe three things. First, he sheweth by a signe the vnslatiabie couetousnesse of rich men, which had rather that their treasures shoulde be corrupt and perish in their coffers and chestes, than that they woulde bestowe any whit of them to supplie the neede of them that be in miserie. Secondly, he declareth their crueltie towards the poore, whom they ought with their riches to cherishe and helpe. Thirdly, he threatneth punishment vnto them, in as much as they gather vnto them selues the treasure of iniquitie, couetousnesse, and crueltie against the day of wrath, who in time to come shall be so eaten of hell fire, that is, they shall be tormented with everlasting flames, as nowe their treasure is eaten of the rust.

The exceeding couetousnes of many rich men.

Vngodly rich men at the last shall not escape vnpunished.

¶.iii.

4 Behold,

A Commentarie vpon the

4 Behold, the hire of the labourers vvhich haue reaped your feeldes (vvhich is of you kept back by fraude) crieth, and the cries of them vvhich haue reaped, are entred into the eares of the Lorde of hostes.

Pay the true
labourer his
peny for his
payne.

He acculeth the vniustice of rich men, denying labourers their due hire, and threatheth punishment vnto them. For by the worde of crying he signifieth, that this iniurie doth as it were sounde in the eares of the Lord, and cal for vengeance.

5 Ye haue liued in pleasure on the earth, and in vvan-
tonnesse. Ye haue nourished your hearts, as in a day
of slaughter.

He reprehendeth the pleasures, lasciuiousnes, and wan-
tonnes, wherein the riche men did delicately pamper vp
themselves. He calleth the day appoynted for sumptuous
and delicate bankets, the day of slaughter.

6 Ye haue condemned and haue killed the iust, and
he hath not resisted you.

This may be referred both vnto crueltie against the poore,
whom the rich men are sayde to haue condemned and kil-
led, when as they did not relieue their neede with their a-
bundance, whereof is that saying of *Augustine*: If thou
hast not fed, thou hast killed: And also to the rigorous ex-
tortion, whereby they haue in iudgements exacted their
debts of their debtors, and haue oppressed them with ser-
uitude that did not pay.

Of riches and contracts or bargaines.

Seeing that Iames seemeth in this place to deale some-
what hardly agaynst the rich men of this world, it see-
meth vnto me a thing worthie the labour to adde some-
thing herevnto concerning riches and contractes or bar-
gaines, which serue to increase our substance, and that vnto
this ende, that the godly may be admonished, how farre
it is lawfull for them to vse such stayes of their life.

For

Epistle of S. James.

34

Forasmuch therfore as some godly men doe get riches by the blessing of the Lorde, and also the societie of man cannot want bargaines, it appeareth sufficiently, that neither to haue riches, neyther to bargayne by it selfe is sin. For we must not thinke that the Gospell doth eyther breake the lawfull bonds of humane societie optake away those things which are necessarie to the maintayning of the life of man. But bicause it is often times offended in the getting of riches, likewise in the possession and vse of them, and also many faults are incident in bargaynes: it is needefull that the godly minde be rightly instructed, whereby it may know, both how to get riches without offence to God, how to vse them being gotten, and also how farre it may exercise vsuall bargaines with a good conscience.

Wherefore first of all let this rule of Christe be moste surely kept: Seeke ye fyrst the kingdome of God and his righteousness, and other thinges shall be ministred vnto you. *Matth. 6.* This rule of Christ conteyneth two thinges, to wit, a commaundement of Christ, and a promise ioyned with obedience toward the commaundement. The commaundement is: Seeke fyrst the kingdome of God and his righteousness. He which will not obey this commaundement, as he is not partaker of the grace of Christ: so he abideth in the kingdome of sinne, and serueth Satan, to whom euerlasting death is reserued for his stipend. Let therfore obedience toward this commaundement of Christ haue the principall place, that is, let the care of our salvation be first and chiefe. The promise is: And other thinges shall be ministred vnto you. This promise will both haue sayth, to wit, that we doe assure our selues that Christe is true, and will haue a care of vs, if we will obey his commaundement: and also it secretly requireth, that euery one by sayth doe diligently in the feare of God those thinges which are agreable to his calling. Heathenish and pro-

phane

The rule of Christ consisteth of two principall poynts, the first whereof is a commaundement.

The promise annexed to the commaundement.

5
13

A Commentarie vpon the

Tim. 5, 8.

A lawfull calling.

What offices are lawfull & to be allowed

phane carefulnes being excluded. For we must not thinke that the promise of Christ doth commend slothfulnes vnto vs. Therefore let him that is endued with the faith of Christ, know, that it is a part of godlynes, without which faith cannot be sound, diligently to doe that dutie, to the which euerie man is called. To this pertayneth that saying of the Apostle: *He that provideth not for his owne, & namely for them of his household, denieth the faith, and is worse then an infidel.* The promise therefore of Christ requireth a holy diligence and an earnest labour of euery man in his calling. But least that any man doth here by and by as it were in the entrie stumble, and doubt whether his calling be lawfull or no: I will briefly touch, what is required to a lawfull calling or function. Two thinges generally are to be considered, to wit, the kind of office, and the execution thereof. Concerning the kinde, this rule is to be obserued. Euery office that maketh for the maintayning and furnishing of the states ordained of God, as are, the ciuil state, the state concerning the gouerning of an house, the ecclesiasticall state, is commaunded in the first and fourth commaundement, as the dutie of the ministers of the word, the function of the magistrats, the seruice of them which helpe the magistrate, the care and charge of maisters of households, the occupations of them whose helpe is profitable and necessarie in the states ordayned of God, the traffique of Marchants, which bring in profitable marchandice: briefly, all offices which serue eyther for the order of the Church of God, or of an house, or of y common weale, are lawfull in them selues, and also in the persons, when they are lawfully called vnto them. And although it be free for euery man to choole any kinde of life, to the which he shall feele himselfe apt: yet we must put a difference betweene a publike and a priuate office. To a publike office is required ordinarie authoritie. For no man may take vnto himselfe a publike office either in the

the Church, or in the common weale, except he be appointed thereunto by ordinary authoritie, he that doth the contrarie, doth sinne, and in affliction can haue no certayne comfort. Wherefore here the godly man will especially take heede, that he doe not enter into a publike office without a lawfull calling. A priuate office euery man may choose vnto himselfe, yet the authoritie of parents ought not here to be contemned. He may applie his minde to the trade of marchandice, whom this kind of life doth please: he may follow husbandry, which thinketh that it is commodious for him: he may choose some arte or occupation, which is perswaded that it will be profitable vnto him. An idle life belongeth not vnto a godly man but vnto an Epicure rather, wherefore of that I will say nothing.

Howe euery man may take a priuate office vpon himselfe.

In the execution of the office or dutie more things are to be considered. First let faith & loue be rules of the actions. Faith taketh hede that it offendeth not God, & referreth all things to his glory of God. Loue admonisheth that there be no iniurie done to any man, & that his commodities of our neighbour be furthered. Faith desireth God to work with it, & to be it helper. Loue embraceth our neighbor in God. Faith kepeth him that worketh, in the feare of God. Loue kepeth him in charitie toward his neighbor. Where if riches by the blessing of the Lord come vnto him, he laboureth in his lawfull calling, singular heede is to be taken, that our riches be not made vnto vs through our own fault, thornes & snares. For they that are rich haue instruments both vnto vertues & also vnto vices, euen as their minds are affected which possesse the. Therefore Plato in my iudgement hath rightly said, that riches without wisdom are blind, but that the same do quickly see when they follow true wisdom. For true is this saying:

Most excellent rules to be obserued of euery man in performing his office and duties.

What wee must doe if God blesse vs with increase of riches.

Riches of euill and mischiefe much
are ministers with speede:
Which doe also contention
amongst vs often breede.

R.I.

And

A Commentarie vpon the

Math. 19. 23.

How the rich
of the worlde
ought to be
affected.

Psal. 62. 10.

1. Tim. 6. 17.

The minde of
the godlye
concerning
riches.

Howe the
wicked and
couetous
are affected
towards
riches.

How the god-
ly man must
behaue him-
selfe concer-
ning his ri-
ches.

And for that cause the Lord sayth: That a rich man shall hardly enter into the kingdome of heauen. For the most parte vse their riches ill, which they might vse well if they would take the counsaile of godly wisdom. First of all therefore, let the godly man knowe how he ought to be affected in his riches, this may very well be knowne both by the wordes of Dauid and also of Paule. Dauid sayth: If riches increase set not your hearts thereon. Paule sayth: Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not high minded, and that they trust not in vncertaine riches but in the living God. These two sayings doe preach both of the minde or affection of a rich man, and also of the vse of riches. The mind ought not to be set vpon riches, or vpon a desire to haue, a godly man ought not to measure his felicitie with the deceitfull measure of riches, but he ought to vse them well, least that he himselfe layeth snares for himselfe. Nazianzenus doth very well describe the mind of a godly man toward riches saying:

One droppe or little portion,
of wisdom I wish more:
Then of riches and worldly wealth,
abundance and great store.

When as the couetous and ungodly man contrariewise sayth:

One droppe of fortunes pleasant cuppe,
I doe much rather craue:
Then great increase, yea euen a tunne,
of wisdom for to haue.

Whosoever therefore wil be godly, let him cast away trust & confidence in riches, least that they be made snares vnto him, least that they doe shutte from him the passage to the kingdome of heauen. Let a sure hope be reposed in God alone, whether riches be increased or diminished, yea or quite taken away, let vs hold fast the true treasure which is Christ Iesus. For he that hath him is rich in deede, although

though with Lazarus he doth beg his breade. Moreover, when thy mynde is thus affected toward riches, this care shall come into it, that thou doe rightly dispose the riches bestowed vpon thee of God, and that thou be a faythfull steward of them. Therefore I will herevnto adde a few wordes concerning the lawfull vse of riches. Ischomachus in Xenophon being asked concerning the lawfull vse of riches, answered in these wordes: I ought with my riches to honour the Gods royally, to helpe my frendes wherein they haue neede, and to suffer the Citie to be adorned in nothing wherein I am able. This man being ignorant of true religion, maketh three partes of the vse of riches, the first part he attributeth to the worship of God, the seconde to his friends being in nede, the thirde to the maintaining and adorning of the common weale, wherein he liueth. But although this sentence of a prophane philosopher is to be praysed, and worthe to be commended to the godly: yet I will shewe more distinctly and plainly the godly and true vse of substance and riches, which consisteth in foure poyntes.

The vse of riches diuided into three parts.

The first and principall vse of riches ought to be, that they serue to the maintayning and increasing of the glorie of God. This vse is confirmed by the ende of man. Man was first made, and afterwarde regenerate by the holy ghost, that he shoulde glorifie God. Therefore what gifts so euer we haue, they ought to be referred to this ende of our creation and restoring agayne. Here many being miserably deceiued, do sin. For there are some which bestow nothing at all to the maintayning of the ministerie. There are some which doe wickedly take away those things that were appoynted of our auncetors for the seruice of God. There are some which with their riches doe encrease the power of tyrames, to the oppressing of the church & abolishing of religion, for whom it were better, if they had neuer bene bozne. For their portion shall be with the deuill

The chiefe & principall vse whervnto riches ought to serue.

How the first and principall vse of riches is utterly neglected of many.

Item.

whose

A Commentarie vpon the

Examples of
such as haue
vsed their ri-
ches chiefly
to the glorie
of God.

whose members they are. Let the godly man therfore bnt
to whome riches haue chaunced in this worlde, loke vnto
this ende of his creation, and bestowe part of his goodes
vpon this vse, that he may set forth the glozie of God, and
maintayne true religion. Let him set before himselfe the
examples of godly men, as of *Dauid, Iosias, Eze-
chias, Constantine, Theodosius, Iohn Fredericke Duke
of Saxonie, Christiernes* the thirde king of Denmarke, and
other Princes and godly men, which desired nothing
more, than according to their abilitie to set forth the glo-
rie of God, to helpe them which taught and learned reli-
gion, to maintaine schooles, and honest priuileges of
schooles, to defende the teachers of godlynesse agaynst the
crueltie and iniurie of wicked men, to whom nothing was
more pleasant, than to inuent diuers craftes and wayes,
whereby they might oppresse both teachers and learners,
the case of which men I do with all my heart lament. For
by their reprobate mynde they doe more and more plunge
themselues in hell.

The seconde
right & law-
full vse of ri-
ches.

The seconde true and lawfull vse of riches ought to be,
that we helpe and adorne the common weales in which
we liue, according to the measure of our riches. For this
cause tributes are inioyned, that by them as by sinewes
the comon weale may be kept and preserued, that is, that
they may be ornaments of peace, helpes of lawfull warre,
the rewarde of them which gouerne the common weale.

Two sortes of
men do chief-
ly offende in
the seconde
right vse of
riches.

But here two kyndes of men doe not a little offende. For
there are some, which although they abounde with wealth,
renoume, and glozie in the tyme of peace: yet when anye
thing is to be layde out to the vse of the comon weale,
this they craftily put of from them selues to the silly and
simple people who are compelled beyonde their strength
and abilitie to bestowe those things which are required.
Here although the simple people doe rightly obey: yet
these inuentors of mischiefes are reserued for their iudge-
ment.

ment. There are also perhappes some, who being not content with their ordinarie rents, doe lay newe exactions upon the subiects, which are condemned by the testimonie of Iohn the Baptist, in as much as they doe not bring forth the fruites of repentance. Christ sayth: Give to Caesar the things which are Caesars, and give vnto God those things which are Gods. But let Caesar knowe that there is a certaine rule which the lawes doe prescribe vnto him. If he shall offende against this, he is made guiltie of the wrath of God. But thou wilt say, is it neuer therefore lawfull for the magistrate to exact of his subiectes any thing beside the ordinarie taxe? We must put a difference betweene the times of peace and warre. In the time of peace let him be content with his ordinarie reuenues, least that he sinne agaynst God: In the time of warre the subiectes doe owe not only their goods, but also their bodies to the magistrate making iust warre, and the godly magistrate may exact vnaccustomed tributes, and require the helpe of the Citizens against the enimies. There may also necessities be incident in the time of peace, that ordinarie stipendes are not sufficient for the magistrate. When this commeth to passe, godly subiectes ought to helpe the present necessities, and the godly magistrate may require so much increase as shall be needefull. But they which do thereupon by litle and litle bring in a custome to oppresse subiects, shall as infidels looke for their punishment at the handes of the iust Iudge, which knoweth howe to bowe downe the neckes of the proude and tyrannes.

The thirde right and lawfull vse of riches is, that euery man finde himselfe things necessarie, & do maintayne his familie according to the state of his calling. But here two vices are to be taken heede of, couetousnesse or vile fashions, & prodigalitie. Couetousnesse or filthy behauiour is unworthie of a mā. Prodigalitie doth rashly waste riches, oftē times vpon bzauerie altogether vnmete for that state

R.iii.

or

Matth. 22. 21.

A question.

The answer.

The thirde lawfull vse of riches, wherein are two things especially to be taken heede of.

5
13

A Commentarie vpon the

oz calling. Therefore a meane, which in euery thing is commended, is here also to be kept. An honest citizen therefore may with his goodes maintayne that which becometh his estate, let him beware that he take not vpon him that honour that belongeth vnto another, let him leaue to the nobilitie their noblenesse and reputation, so let an honest noble man maintayne his state, and leaue vnto the Princes their magnificence and sumptuousnesse. After the same sort let teachers of godlynes in scholes and temples modestly maintayne their state. Brieflye let euery one thinke what is agreeable to his person and condition.

The fourth & last lawful vse of riches.

VWhy God will haue the poore to be among vs.

The fourth and last right and lawful vse of riches ought to be, that we should be moued also with the calamitie of the needy, and hold this for most certayne, that God doth suffer the poore and needy to be in the myddt of vs, that he may trie of what redines we are to obey his commaundement, (for he doth commaund vs that we shoulde reach forth our hande to the needy) and how mercifull we are toward the members of the sonne of God, which if we doe contemne, we doe despise also the head. For it cannot be that he should loue the head which causeth paine & griefe to the members. But of this vse more hereafter.

Of contractes or bargaines.

Mutual soci- etie and bargaines are very necessarie among men.

FOrasmuch therefore as men are so created, that they must of necessitie liue in societie, and their condition is such, that they cannot mayntayne their state without mutual labour and duties: the life of man truly hath neede of contractes or bargaines, by which is made a certayne interchangeable course of laboures and offices. And the societie of men among them selues can no more want the commoditie of bargaynes, then water and fire. Therefore seeing that the godly and vngodly are wont to bargayne one with an other, and there is oftentimes no small offence made in bargayning through the naughtines of men:

men: it is a thing necessary that the godly be instructed whereby they may knowe how farre it is lawfull to bargain with a good conscience and without offence to God, that they doe not attempt to doe any thing, their conscience eyther douting, eyther being deceiued, eyther striving agaynst them. And although a full and absolute doctrine concerning bargayning doth pertayne to the lawyers, who of purpose doe very often teach of bargaynes: yet because ciuil rules often times doe not satisfie mens consciences, I will gather a certayne brieve aduertisement which the godly minde may safely follow in bargaining. Ifirst therefore I will laye two foundations, vpon which all those things which I am about to speake shall depend. Secondly I will declare the chiefe kindes of bargaynes, and will shewe how they agree with the foundation. The first foundation shalbe this, taken from the lawe of nature: That which thou wilt not haue done to thy selfe, doe not thou to another, and contrariwise, that which thou wilt haue rightly done to thy selfe, thou mayst doe to another. Nazianzenus uttereth this foundation after this sort:

The first foundation of all contracts and bargaynes.

To doe those things to other men
see that thou doe refraine:
Which thou thy selfe vnwilling art
to take of them agayne.

Upon this foundation Christ will haue all duties among men, yea and all actions and bargaynes to be buylded. For thus he sayth: *Matth. 7.* Whatsoeuer ye would that men shoulde do to you, euen so doe ye to them. He addeth the reason of this foundation. This, sayth he, is the lawe and the Prophetes, that is, this is the scope and ende of the Lawe and the Prophetes, or whatsoever the lawe and the Prophetes doe commaunde, it is contayned in this common poynt. And Paul sayth: He that loueth another, hath fulfilled the lawe. Also: The ende of the commaundement is lone out of a pure heart, signifying that all duties among

The confirmation of the first foundation of bargaynes.

Rom. 13. 8.
1. Tim. 1. 5.

¶ 2. iiii.

men

A Commentarie vpon the

The effects of
true loue.

men are to be tried and examined by loue as by a touch-
stone. This loue as it doth not to any other that which it
will not haue done to it selfe: so it doth rightly to euerye
in that which it would haue done to it selfe. This founda-
tion as it doth in euery bargayne require true dealing
and exclude deceite: so it will haue equalitie betweene
them that bargain according to the proportion of an A-
rithmetick, which doth measure, number and wey all
chaunging equally, and therefore the bargain which is
grounded on this foundation is to be accounted equal and
lawfull. Equall, bicause an Arithmetickall proportion is
observed therein. Lawfull, bicause it is agreeable to the
law of nature, which a wise lawyer in the doctrine of bar-
gaines doth set before his eyes. Whereupon it cometh
to passe that it is called lawfull also, bicause it is confir-
med eyther by a law made, or by the decree of wisemen
not disagreeing with the ten commaundements, which are
an abridgment of the law of nature.

Bargaines
grounded vpon the foun-
dation afore-
sayd are both
equall and
lawfull.

The seconde
foundation of
contracts and
bargaynes.

Let the second foundation be this taken from the na-
ture of the Gospell: The Gospell doth approue ciuil or-
dinaunces, which the wise magistrate doth iudge to be
profitable to his common weale. This is manifest, bicause
the Apostles of Christe did neuer change the forme of ci-
uil ordinances, where they taught the Gospell: which
without doubt they would haue done, if they could not
haue stand with the Gospell. The Apostle knew that there
was a difference to be put betweene the kingdomes of
the world and the kingdome of Christ. They, bicause they
are worldly, are ruled by ciuil lawes and ordinances, this,
bicause it is spirituall, is gouerned spirituallly. Upon this
foundation it followeth, that as a godly man may vse the
ciuil ordinances of that common weale wherein he lieth:
so it is lawfull for a wise magistrate to make lawes pro-
fitable to his common weale, by which bargaines and of-
fices of a ciuil life are gouerned. But I would haue these
things

things so to be taken, that the law giuer doe not swarue from the first foundation, and the tenne commandements, that is, that he make no law disagreeing with the loue of God and charitie towardes our neyghbours. These two foundations I will haue applied to all bargaynes, as consultations by which it shall be pronounced as often as a question is moied concerning any bargayne.

The kindes of ciuil bargaynes, of which we haue determined in this place to speake are these: 1. Exchange of things. 2. Bying and selling. 3. Borrowing. 4. Lending. 5. Letting forth and hyring. 6. Contracts of societie. If there be any other kindes of bargaynes, let them be learned out of the writings of wise lawyers, whom the godly mind may safely follow, except it seeth them contrary to the loue of God and charitie toward our neighbour. There are some which make two chiefe kinds of bargaynes: one whereby the dominion of a thing together with the vse is translated from ones possession to an others, the other, whereby y only vse of a thing is graunted. Aristotle taught that the exchange of things is diuided into three partes. The first, whereby things are changed with things, the second, whereby things are changed with mony, the third whereby mony is changed with mony. I confesse y epyther diuision is learned & perfect, yet I do prefer before others this comon diuision which I haue set downe, not bicause it is more perfect or learned, but bicause it commeth nerer to the capacitie of the people, and is more vsuall. Therefore I leaue both that diuision of two partes, and also that of three partes of Aristotle to the lawyers and philosophers to be disputed vpon, being about to speake in order of those sixe kindes which I haue propounded.

He purpo-
seth to speake
of sixe seuerall
kindes of
bargaynes.

Of the Exchange of things.

Chaunging of one thinge for an other before money was inuented was most vsuall and profitable, as with-

Di.

que

A Commentarie vpon the

How exchange
of things is
made and
when it is
lawfull.

In changing
of things
chiefly three
kindes of de-
ceit may be
vsed.

out which the societie of man coulde not be mayntayned. But the vse of money being inuented, it was not so vsuall amongst all. Now exchange of thinges is then made, whe thinges are changed not with mony but with other thinges, as when wine is changed with cozne, or hides with butter. This exchange of thinges is then lawfull, when it doth not depart from those two foundations which we haue made concerning euery honest bargaine. In the chaunging of things therfore equalitie is to be kept wth out deceit. For deceit may be here committed many wayes, but especially after thre sortes, in substance, in quantitie, in qualitie. In substance, if mingled wine be giuen for pure wine, if graine or cozne mingled with cockle or darnel, or with the seede of any such corrupt and naughtie weedes, be vttered for good grayne. In quantitie, if equalitie be not kept in weight, measure, and number. In qualitie, when naughtie and corrupt thinges be vttered for pure and sound thinges. Whosoener vseth deceit in these, as he doth overthrow y^e foundations of iustice, so if he do it knowing it and willingly, he sinneth against God, passeth y^e rule of charity and is made guiltie of y^e breaking of humane societie. Many men doe flatter & as it were tickle themselves, when in exchange of thinges they doe deceiue any, but it falleth out with these as with y^e fishes, which together with y^e bait deuoure also y^e hooke. For the gaine is pleasant, but they being held fast wth the hoke of Satan, shal not escape punishment. But I am not ignorant what good men do perhaps speake against these thinges. For deceitful mē haue a thousand wils & crafts, by which they do deceiue themselves & not God, who equitie requireth tempered with sincere charitie.

Of bying and selling.

Bying and sel-
ling neyther
very auncient
nor yet com-

Bying and selling are properly sayd to be, as often as thinges are changed not with things but with money. This kinde of bargayning is neyther most auncient, nor most

most common. For both it was unknowne to those men ^{mon among}
 that liued in the former ages of the worlde, and also at this ^{all nations.}
 day it is not in vse among manye nations. But it was
 brought in among many onely through the necessitie of
 mans lyfe, whereupon also it hath the name of mony. For
 it is called in Latine *Namus*, as it were of the Greeke
 worde *Nomos*, which signifieth a lawe, bicause it hath of-
 tentimes it vse and value by the iudgement, determina-
 tion, and lawe of men. In this kynde of bargayne he that ^{A seller.]}
 translateth a thing into the dominion and possession of an-
 other receyuing mony for it, doth sell, and the thing that
 is translated is ware or merchandice. On the contrarpe, ^{A buyer.}
 he which giuing mony receyueth ware or marchandice, is
 sayde to buye. Here we must not regarde what the monye
 is worth in it selfe, but publike authoritie, vse, or iudge-
 ment is to be considered. For the value of the mony is by
 lawe rather than by nature. Wherefore equalitie is not
 here to be considered in the substance of the mony, but in
 the vse thereof. This kinde of trade according to the foun-
 dations before layde, requireth equalitie without decepte
 betwene the byer and the seller: He which here wittingly
 and willingly doth oppresse or defraude his brother in any
 matter, hath contrary to the precept of Paule broken the ^{1. The sal. 4. 6.}
 equalitie of iustice required in contracts and bargaynes.
 Wherefore the godly must take especiall heede, that they
 doe vse no decepte eyther in the wares or in the price. Let <sup>The office &
duty of him
that selleth.</sup>
 the ware be sayde of the seller to be such as it is in deede,
 or at the least, such as it is thought to be, without fallhode
 and deceite, let the due price be aunswereable thereunto,
 that the proportion of an Arithmeticke maye be obserued.
 But here it may not without a cause be demaunded what
 the due or reasonable price is. To this I doe thus simple
 aunswere. Euery pryce is not due and reasonable which <sup>VWhat is to
be obserued
concerning
the price of
things.</sup>
 the byer & the seller do agree vpon betweene themselves
 by their priuate iudgement: but y which eyther is named

D.ii.

and

A Commentarie vpon the

and let of the iust and publike priuers of thinges ordain-
ned of the magistrate, or which is priced according to
the common value of the thing, at that time when the bar-
gayne is made. He therefore which to day doth buy a bus-
shell of corne according to the common price for three
shillings, may afterward, a certayne time being betwene,
sell the same for five shillings, if this then be the common
price. Contrariwise, if after certayne moneths it be bought
commonly for one shilling, he offendeth which asketh thre
for it, although he bought it for three. For here regard is
to be had of the time and place, and the plentie and scar-
citie of the thinges which are solde, is to be conside-
red. But here three sortes of men doe most grievously of-
fende, as they that ingrosse all into their owne hands, that
no man may sell or gayne but they, hucksters commonly
called regraters, and they which doe first set a price of
things according to their owne priuate iudgement, that
their couetousnesse maye be satisfied. In the number of
these are they which haue plentie of Butter, Oren, wine,
corne, or other things through the perely profits of their
rents. When as some hauing neede doe buye of these they
are compelled, whether they will or no, to giue so much as
is asked: Whereby oftentimes it cometh to passe, that
the seller of corne or other things, the common price being
not yet set and confirmed, doth sell exceeding deare. Whose
example when other also which haue plentie of the lyke
things, doe followe, it falleth out that a bushell of corne,
which perhaps otherwise might be sold for two shillings,
is solde for eyght. But thou wilt say, the ware is myne,
why is it not lawfull for me to sell it as I can? the buyer
is free, he may eyther buye or not buye, what doe I there-
fore offend? Thy sinne is exceeding great, cloke it by what
name or title soeuer thou wilt. For thou doste not so much
offende agaynst thy buyer, as agaynst the whole common
weale, which thou doest wounde worse, than if thou didst
inuaide

Three kindes
of men especi-
ally do offend
in bying and
selling.

An obiection.

The aunswere
How greuou-
sly they sinne,
which en-
hance and

Epistle of S. James.

51

Inuade it with robbrie. For through thy couetousnesse it
 commeth to passe that many are pyned with miserie and
 famine. He which is iniurious agaynst one man doth de-
 serue euerlasting paynes : what shall be thought concer-
 ning thee, which killest so many families with hunger, or
 at the least art the cause that they liue in greater miserie:
 Thou mayst excuse thy selfe before the iudgement seat of
 men, but God doth not esteeme such craftie euasions, nei-
 ther is he deceyued with the peruerse interpretation of his
 lawe. For his iudgement seat is iust, which doth not re-
 garde the person. The buyers also doe here oftentimes
 offende. For it falleth out sometimes that they buye dea-
 rer, eyther bicause the payment is deferred, or that they
 may procure the fauour of great men, of whom they buye,
 that the gayne which is nothing at all hoped for by the
 things that are bought, may be recompenced by some o-
 ther meanes. Here more things might be sayde, but these
 may be sufficient for them that haue vnderstanding. For
 I doe looke to preuayle little with them, which loue godli-
 nesse with *Aiax*. *Aiax* would seeme deuout towards God
 so long as he perceyued nothing to bee required of him
 which was contrary to his affections : but when he was
 commaunded to spare *Vlysses*: In other things, sayth he,
 I will obey thee, but not in this thing. Of this sort is the
 religion of many at this day, they will be louers of godly-
 nesse so that it doth not disagree with their affections,
 which they will haue wholye to be satisfied, yea though
 God be angrie therewithall. What I pray you, is more
 horrible than to preferre their owne affections before the
 commaundement of God: But this is sufficient, for these
 men will not heare vs. The question concerning the rede-
 ming of a bargayne, is dissolued out of *Leuiticus*, where
 the Lorde doth commende vnto his people the lawe con-
 cerning the redeeming of bargaynes. But then onely I
 iudge this kynde of bargayning to be allowed, when it

rayse the price
 of thinges
 without cause

To loue god-
 lines with *A-
 iax*, is so long
 onely to be
 godly while
 nothing is re-
 quired of vs
 contrary to
 our owne af-
 fections, in
 which num-
 ber are too
 many at
 this day.

Redeming of
 bargaynes.

D.iii.

doth

A Commentarie vpon the

doth not disagree with the foundation before taught: Do not that to another which thou wilt not haue done to thy selfe. As the conscience of a godly man maye trust vnto this onely foundation in all bargaynes: so also in that bargayne wherein is made a couenant for the redeeming thereof.

Of Borowing.

What borowing is.

Two thinges to be marked in borowing.

A precept of Hesiodus concerning borowing and restoring that which is borrowed.

We are bound by a double bond to lend vnto others.

Luke. 6. 34.

Borowing is a contract or bargayne whereby the dominion of a thing is translated vnto an other, no price being put betweene, but with a couenant that the same thing be restored agayne in the same kind or sort. But here are two thinges to be considered of the godly, equalitie, and a bond. Equalitie, if in equal number, measure and weight thou restore that which thou hast receyued without deceit: deceit excludeth fault in the substance, quantitie, and qualitie of the thing. To this belongeth that precept of Hesiodus: Borrowe of thy neyghbour by righte measure, and restore agayne by the same right measure, and by greater also if thou art able. Where as he sayth: & by greater if thou art able, it may apertayne vnto thankfulness, although the Poet maketh an other cause, to wit this: that thou mayest find thy neyghbour ready to lende thee, if at any other time thou hast neede. Let there be a double bond obserued, a naturall and a christian bond. The naturall bond is that, by which we are bound by the law of nature to lend vnto others, which doe neede that thing that is ours. Of this bond the precept of Hesiodus may be vnderstand. The christian bond is, by which the Lord doth bind those that are his to lend all that neede, that is, not onely them, of whom we hope for the like agayne, but euen those, of whom we looke for no such good turne or benefite. Lend, sayth Christ looking for nothing agayne. Christ doth not speake here of free giuing or of almes, wherby he which hath borrowed any thing, is bound to

to restore the same agayne, without deceit in the same kind or sort: But this commaundement of Christ is set against the malice of the Jewes, and the corrupting of the lawe of Moses. The lawe commaundeth to lende, but the Jewes tooke it to be spoken with this exception: lende not indifferently to all that haue neede, but onely to them, of whom the like benefite may be looked for agayne. This error and corrupting of the lawe of God the Lorde doth correct, and commaundeth them that be his, not onely to lende them which are able to render the like good turne agayne, but also others, to wit them, of whom they neuer looke for the lyke benefite agayne. Let vs make this manifest by an example: Some fisher desireth to borrow something of thee, nowe thou thinkest with thy selfe, that he may at some time or other pleasure thee agayne eyther in the lyke, or in some other kynde of dutie. If thou hast lent him with hope of the lyke benefite agayne, thou hast offended nothing. For what doth he offende which for a good turne looketh for thankfulness. There cometh another hauing neede, whose state is such that thou mayest looke for no recompence at all of him. If thou wilt not lend this man, thou breakest the rule of Christ, following rather the wicked custome of the heathen, than the commaundement of Christ, whereby thou shewest that thou doest contemne the voyce of Christ. Wherefore Christ doth not here commaunde that thou shouldest not looke that that shoulde be restored which thou hast lent, as some do unwisely interpret this saying, for then it shoulde not be called lending, but almes rather: but he hath regarde to the persons, to wit, that the goodly doe helpe them by lending, of whome they loke for no comodity or benefite agayne. This my interpretation y^e circumstances of y^e place do confirme, for in that place the Lorde correcteth y^e corruptions of the Pharisees, by which they seruing their owne affections, had maliciously corrupted the lawe of God. They did interpret

D.iiii.

the

How the Jewes corrupted the law concerning lending.

The meaning of the saying of Christ before mentioned concerning lending.

5
13

A Commentarie vpon the

The precept concerning lending, as I haue also touched before, after this sort. Lend, but lend him which is able to lende thee agayne when thou doest neede, or by some other kinde of dutie to recompence the benefite and to shew thankfulness. This restraynt Christe taketh away by this foundation: If ye doe good for them which doe good for you what thanke shall ye haue? and if ye lend to them of whom ye hope to receiue, what thanke shall ye haue? for euen the sinners lend to sinners to receiue the like. that is, that they may at some other time shewe the like pleasure to them agayne, eyther particularly or generally. The summe therefore of the precept of Christ is, that we doe not lend them only which are able to requite the same, but also others of whom we looke for no recompence of a benefite bestowed. Hereunto pertayneth the saying of the Psalmist: *A good man is mercifull and lendeth.* Here the Psalmist numbzeth the duty of lending among the fruites of the feare of God. And although the vngodly also doe sometimes lend, yet we must diligently put a difference betweene the lending of the vngodly and of the godly. The vngodly doe onely regard their owne commoditie, but the godly doe meditate and thinke vpon these thinges in order. First they haue regarde to the commandement of God, by which they know they are bound, and therefore they lend with a cheerfull mind and a ready will, bicause God hath so commaunded, and they iudge the duty of lending whereby they doe releue the needy, to be a necessary worke and a seruice which God doth earnestly require of them that be his. Secondly they doe adioyne sayth by which they behold the promise of God who promisseth recompence of obedience as the Psalmist sayth: *Blessed is the man that feareth the Lord.* &c. Also, *who shall dwell in thy tabernacle? he that worketh righteousness.* Moreover the godly doe consider the obiects, they weigh with themselves that they are the members of Christ which require their

Luke. 6. 33.
34.

Psalm. 112. 5.

The lending
of the godly
and of the vngodly
doe much differ.

What the
godly consider
and regard
in their
lending.

Psalm. 15. 1. 2.

Epistle of S. James.

53

their helpe. Wherefore they doe lend them that they may comfort and refrefhe the members of Chrift. By these differences the lending of the godly is distinguished from the lending of the vngodly, who regard onely them felues and their owne commoditie.

Of Vfurie.

That borowling is done after two sortes euen experience it selfe doth witnes. For sometime it is done with a couenant, & so much, equal weight, measure, & nūber being kept, as was receiued, be restored, & nothing more. Of which kind of borowling it hath bene hitherto spoken of vs. Sometime it is done with a couenant, that somewhat more then the principall, as they call it, be giuen for the dutie of lending. The taking of this excesse or ouerplus is an offence, especially when it commeth for the duty of lending which we owe to our neighbour by Gods law and by the law of nature. And it is called vsurie of this, bicause it commeth to the principall for the vse of euery thing. Neyther must we thinke that vsurie hath place in the lending of money onely. For in the lending of all thinges that is sayd to be vsurie, which for the bounden dutie of lending is ginen, more then that that was receyued, as the lawe doth playnely shewe, and Ambrose witnesseth, when he sayth: Heate is vsurie, and a garment is vsurie, and giue it what thou wilt, it is vsurie. Now I call that the bounden dutie of lending to the which we are so bound by Gods law and by the law of nature, that vnles we doe lend him that desireth vs and doth neede in deede, we do sinne against God, & violate the charitie due to our neighbour. And although it may after a sort be vnderstand by those thinges which haue bene sayd concerning borowling, what is to be iudged of vsurie: yet for plainer instructions sake I thinke it meete and expedient to adde hereunto something concerning vsurie. But that there

Two sorts of borowling.

Vherin' Vfurie consisteth.

¶ i.

may

A Commentarie vpon the

The chiefe
points which
he meaneth to
handle con-
cerning vsury.

may be a due order of the handling therof, we will intreat of these things in order. First we will declare what prohibitions or forbiddings there be of vsurie, and what be the causes of these prohibitions. Secondly, we will note the punishments of vsurers, that the thinking of the punishments maye somewhat repressse the couetousnesse of vsurers. Then we will make diligent inquisition whether there be any contract or bargayne like vnto vsurie in part, which is not forbidden by the law of God. And if there be any such, howe farre the godly man maye vse it with a good conscience, and without offence to God. Moreover we will gather certaine admonitions, vnto which as vnto certaine consultations, and rules to take counsell by, it shalbe profitable to haue regard in euery kinde of bargaines and businesse. Finally we will admonish how the stewards of the mysterpes of God, that is, the preachers of the Gospel maye behaue themselves in the matter of vsurie, that they do neyther communicate with other mens offences, nor attempt any thing that may turne to their destruction.

Of the first.

Fourē prohi-
bitions of
vsurie.

The prohibitions or forbiddings of vsurie are foure, into which if we will godlye and earnestly looke, we shall perceyue more clearly than the daye what is to be iudged concerning this whole trade of vsurie. Wherefore I will rehearse them distinctly and in order.

The first pro-
hibition of
vsurie.

The first is sayde to be naturall. For Aristotle without controuerſie the chiefe of Philosophers, doth teach that vsurie is agaynst nature, being moued by this argument: Money by nature cannot bring forth, therefore to take vsurie of money is contrary to nature. And for this cause vsurie is thought to be called of the Grecians *Tocos*, of bringing forth, as though there were a certaine birth of money, that euen by the very name it may be infamous. Aristophanes calleth vsurie a beast, which in procelle of time doth

The very hea-
then Philoso-
phers did dis-
allow vsurie
and affirme it
to be contra-
rie to nature.

doth bring forth mony in more abundant increase. *Plato* also doth cast vsurie out of his common weale. For thus he sayth in his fift booke of lawes: Let it be lawful if any taketh mony vpon interest, to reder neither the interest, nor the principall. This prohibition of *Plato* is groundd vpon a naturall principle, to wit, that that is in no case to be suffred in a citie, whatsoeuer it be, which is agaynst the lawe of nature and mutuall charitie, and is the cause of the ruine of families and common weales, which nature biddeth to be preserued and maintayned. *Plutarch* concludeth that vsurie is contrary to nature by this principle: Of nothing nothing is made. *Cicero* compareth vsurie to man slaughter. Wherefore it is manifest that as manslaughter is contrarie to nature, so also vsurie is contrarie thereto. Moreover, inequality in bargaining is agaynst nature. For the worke thereof is the destruction of nature. Gayne therfore that is giuen for the bounden dutie of lending is agaynst nature. For it doth manifestly bring inequality. Finally, seing that the ciuill societie is especially according to nature, trulpe it must be that vsurie is an enemie to nature, inasmuch as it doth appayze and diminish the humane societie.

Other reasons
proving vsury
to be against
nature.

The seconde prohibition is diuine. For *Moses*, the *Prophetes* and the *Psalmes* doe forbid and condemne vsurie. The cause of this forbidding is expressely added in many places, to wit, that our neighbour be not oppressed with vsurie. *Exod. 22.* If thou lend mony to my people, that is, to the poore with thee, thou shalt not be as an vsurer vnto him: thou shalt not oppresse him with vsurie. *Leuit. 25.* Thou shalt not giue him thy monie to vsurie, nor lende him thy vittayles for increase. The cause of the precept goeth before: that thy brother may liue with thee, to wit, not oppressed with vsurie. *Deut. 23.* Thou shalt not giue to vsurie to thy brother: as vsurie of mony, vsurie of meat, vsurie of any thing that is put to vsurie. Vnto a straunger thou

The second
prohibition of
vsurie out of
the word
of God.

Verse 25.

Verse 37.

Verse 19. 20.

P. ii.

mayst

A Commentarie vpon the

Verse. 3.

mayst lende vpon vsurie, but thou shalt not lende vpon vsurie vnto thy brother, that the Lorde thy God may blesse thee in all that thou setteest thine hande to. Moses speaketh here also of the vsurie that oppresseth our neighbour. For out of the Hebrue text it may thus be translated: Thou mayst byte a straunger with vsurie, but thy brother thou shalt not byte. Ezech. 18. He that hath not giuen forth vpon vsurie, neyther hath taken any increase, is iust, and shall surely liue. Herevpon it followeth in the contrarie sense, that he is vniust and shall die which hath giuen vpon vsurie and taken increase. In the 15. Psalm it is sayde that he shall dwell in the tabernacle of the Lord which giueth not his mony vpon vsurie. And that this Psalm also speaketh of vsurie which byteth and oppresseth our neyghbour, it is manifest. For the Psalmist bleseth the worde *Nesec*, which hath it name of biting. Agayne, there is no doubt, but that vsurie is here prohibited, which before was forbidden in Moses, to wit, that which biteth and oppresseth our neighbour. For the Prophetes bring no newe doctrine, but only are interpreters of Moses.

The third prohibition of vsurie taken from ciuill ordinances & lawes of common weales.

The thirde prohibition is politike or ciuill. For among the most auncient Romanes there was no maner, no permission of vsurie, but publike cursing and punishing thereof. But in procelle of time, when together with rule and riches, couetousnesse and riot did increase, vsurie began by little & little, and was oftentimes more & more increased, vntill the matter of vsurie came vnto sedition and discord, for which cause the gouernours of common weales, bicause they coulde not vtterly abolishe vsurie, did with lawes repress it as much as they coulde. The citie of Athens did commit wholly vnto Solon that he shoulde moderate the vsurie by which the Athenians were almost oppressed. For when there was a sedition risen for the crueltie of vsurers, which did compell the sonnes and daughters of their debtors to be brought into bondage, and to be solde, that the

interest

interest might be payde : Solon, the Citizens requesting him, made the first lawe, that it shoulde not afterward be lawfull that any free bodie shoulde be brought into seruitude for debtes or vsury. And this measure of vsury did Solon ordayne, that no more shoulde be demaunded than the hundredth part, that is, so much as did counteruayle the principall in the hundredth moneth, that is, of an hundred crownes euery moneth one crowne. But the Emperours did forbid the hundredth part to be receyued for interest, except it were in things caried ouer the sea, but in other lawfull trades they did permit the eyght part of the hundredth, that is, of an hundred crownes euery yere eyght crownes. But to the Noble men in euery contract or bargaine they did not permit aboue the fourth part of the hundredth, that is, euery yere of an hundred crownes, foure crownes, but to the comon people the sixt part of the hundredth was permitted, that is, euery yere of an hundred crownes, sixe crownes. This moderation of the Emperours was highly to be praysed, which did both repressse the vniust exaction of vsurie, and also prouided that the goodes of private men were not wasted by vniuersall vsurie.

How Solon did moderate vsurie among the Athenians

The moderation of vsurie which the ancient Emperours made.

The fourth prohibition is ecclesiasticall. Now I call an ecclesiasticall prohibition, not the decrees of the Pope, whom we doe acknowledge neither the head, nor the taile of the Church, but of holy Synodes, by which vsurie was streightly prohibited. Also the sayings of holy fathers against vsurie. In the 47. decrees there is mention made of the canons of the Apostle, in which vsurie is condemned. The Nicene Synod, in which were 318. fathers did also condemne vsurie. And Gratianus against the vsurie of Clergie men, doth adde these wordes out of the decrees of the Nicene councell. Because many of the clergie for couetousnes sake, seeking after filthy lucre, haue forgotten the diuine precept, wherein it is sayd: He that giueth not his money vpon vsurie, this holy councell hath decreed, that, if

The fourth prohibition of vsurie which is taken out of the decrees of Synodes and the sayings of holy fathers.

Gratianus against vsurie.

Psalme 15. 5.

Ps.iii.

any

A Commentarie vpon the

Hierome a-
gainst vsurie.

Augustine a-
gainst vsurie.

Ambrose a-
gainst vsurie.

any be found after this decree to take vsurie, or by anye
such trade to seeke after filthie lucre, &c. he be throwne
out of the Clergie, and counted voyde of all ecclesiasticall
decree or office. *Hierome* sayth: To seeke vsurie, or to de-
fraude or to take violently doe nothing differ. Lend to thy
brother, and take that that thou hast lent and seeke for no
ouerplus, because the ouerplus is counted for vsurie. *Aug-
ustine* sayth: what shall I say of vsurie, which euen the
verie lawes and iudges themselues doe commaund to be
rendred? whether is he crueller which stealeth or taketh
away any thing from a rich man, or he which killeth a
pooze man with vsurie? These thinges verily and such
like are possessed ill, and I would that they were restored,
but there is none who being Iudge they shalbe required
agayne. But now let vs wisely consider what is written:
To a faythfull man the whole world is riches, but to an
vnfaithfull man not somuch as a halfe peny. Doe we not
conuince all men, which seeme to themselues to reioyce in
the goods that they haue gotten, and know not how to vse
them, to possesse that which belongeth to an other? For
that truly belongeth not to an other which is possessed
rightly. But that is possessed rightly which is possessed
iustly. And that is possessed iustly, which is possessed well.
Euery thing therefore that is possessed ill, belongeth to
another. These wordes sayth *Augustine*. *Ambrose* sayth:
Why doste thou turue the industrie of nature into decept?
Why doste thou desire that there shoulde be lack of things
necessarpe? Why doste thou make scarcitie to be wished
for to the pooze, and doste lament common plentie. Thou
doest espie when there is small increase. Thou callest that
industrie, which is the practise of subtiltie, and that which
thou callest a remedie, is a deuise of mischiefe. But may I
call vsurie theft (those are taken for the tymes of theft, in
which thou being a cruell decepuer, doste creepe into the
bowels of men) vnto whom the vsurie of corne layde vp is
multi-

multiplied? Why doest thou wish euill to all men? thy
 gaine is publicke losse. The same sayth also in an other
 place: He fighteth without a weapon which exacteth vsu-
 rie: he reuengeth himselfe of his enemy without a sword
 which is a receiuer of vsurie. *Chrysostome* sayth: Lende,
 take greater vsurie, but lend so, that thou shalt receiue
 there where as is no enuie, no accusation, no deceit, no ter-
 rour. Lend nothing to them that be in neede but vnto
 Christ who both suffred neede and hunger for thee, and
 also nourisheth all men. For this vsurie doth prepare a
 kingdome, but the other prepareth hel fire: this is a point
 of godlines and mercie, the other of crueltie and conetous-
 nes. The same sayth in an other place: there is nothing
 more filthy then vsurie, nothing more cruel. An vsurer pro-
 cureth the miseries of others and his lucre maketh the ad-
 uersitie of an other. Such a one doth as it were lift vp his
 hand and thrust into shipwrecke. The same saith in an o-
 ther place: The money of an vsurer is like to the sting of
 an Aspe. For he that is stong of an Aspe being as it were
 delighted, doth fall into a sleepe and through the soundnes
 of sleepe doth dye, because then the venim doth priuily
 runne through all his members: So he which taketh vp-
 on vsurie, doth for the time feele as it were a benefite, but
 the vsurie doth runne through all his substance, and con-
 uerteth all into dette. *Lactantius* sayth: If a man hath lent
 any money let him not take vsurie, that the benefite may
 be safe and perfect, which releueth necessitie, and let him
 altogether abstaine himselfe from that that is an other
 mans. For in this kinde of dutye he ought to be content
 with his owne, whom it behoueth otherwise not to spare
 that that is his owne that he may doe good. But to take
 more then he gaue is vniust, which he that doth, doth after
 a sort practise deceit, that he may get his pray by the ne-
 cessitie of an other. *Bernard* saith: What is vsurie? the
 popson of a Patrimonie. What is vsurie according to the

Chrysostome
 against vsurie.

The money of
 an vsurer very
 fitly compa-
 red to the poi-
 son of an Aspe

Lactantius a-
 gainst vsurie.

Bernard a-
 gainst vsurie.

P.iiii.

law?

A Commentarie vpon the

law? a theefe forgettelling what he intendeth, (to wit, to ra-
uin). *Luther* doth most greuously inueigh against vsurers,
whose writings, because they are in the handes of many,
I will not here make mention of any thing out of them.
Hitherto we haue spoken of the prohibitions of vsurie,
and of the causes of the prohibitions, of all which this sen-
tence is concluded: that vsurie is therfore forbidden, that
by it our neighbour be not hurt, that charitie among men
be not broken, that humane societie be not disturbed, that
the goods of priuate men be not wasted to the destruction
of families and common weales. As often as therfore we
read that vsurie is prohibited, let vs looke vnto these endes
of the prohibition, least that vnder a pretence of vsurie that
is forbidden, we doe iudge to sharply of other contractes
and bargaines which the lawes doe allow.

The chiefe
causes wher-
fore vsurie is
forbidden.

Of the second.

Three kinds
of punishment
of vsurers.

How the aun-
cient Romans
punished vsu-
rers and what
they iudged
of them

The corrupti-
on of our
time is great.

An example

I find that the punishment of vsurers is of three sortes, to
wit, ciuil, spirituall, and ecclesiasticall. The ciuil punish-
ment according to the auncient lawes of the Romans, as
Cato witnesseth, was, that vsurers should be punished with
paying foure times as much, theeuers with paying onelye
twise as much. Surely the auncients did sufficiently de-
clare by this sentence, that they did iudge vsurers to be
woyse and moze hurtfull then common theeuers. And for
this cause they were not suffred to come to publike digni-
ties and offices as men vnworthy of them, But, alas, so
great at this day is the corruption of christian maners,
that they which were infamous among the prophane nati-
ons, and counted woysse then theeuers, are iudged worthy of
very hie honour, yea and that among Christians. I reme-
ber being a child when there were onely two vsurers in
this realme which wer commonly knowne: of whom one
being one of the common sort did dwell in *Morea* in *Den-*
mark. This mā although he was exceeding rich through *vs-*
urie,

urie, yet after his death his children which he left were brought vnto such pouertie, that we haue seene in this citie a certaine daughter of his, not onely in a tye and filthy garment, and that scarce couering those partes of the body which nature biddeth to be couered: but also following, in the sight of many, a most filthie trade, whereby notwithstanding she could not keepe her selfe from beggerie.

ample wor-
thie to be
noted of all,
but specially
of vngodly
vsurers.

There was an other which came of a better familie, vnto whom no small substance had come by inheritance. This man, greedy desire of money pricking him forward, doth apply his mind to vsurie, and by little and little doth so heape vp gaine gotten by vsury, that he became exceeding rich in money. But what commeth here to passe? riches vniustly heaped vp went partly to the kinges Elcheke, I cannot tell for what causes, and partly doe yet serue to maintaine gluttony and riot. Wherby it is easie to coniecture, what the ende of them will be, which as yet doe enioy any of those riches, vnlesse they doe in time repent.

Another ex-
ample of an
vsurer.

But thou wilt say, what doe these thinges pertayne to ciuil punishment? very much in euery respect. For this is the order of the iustice of God, when the ciuil magistrate doth negligently execute the office committed vnto him, God, as the chiefe monarch and prince is wont to put to his hand, and to punish euery ciuil transgressions with corporall punishments, that men may thinke that they shall not therefore escape their due punishments, eyther because their doings are hid from the ciuil magistrate, or because the magistrate him selfe eyther through feare, or slouthfulness, or ignorance, or to much partialitie doth not his office, nor calleth all offences to diligent examination.

Though vsu-
rers are not
punished of
men, yet they
shall not es-
cape the pu-
nishment of
God.

Let not men therfore hereupon promise themselves to escape unpunished, bicause they seeme that they can easily auoyde the handes of the ciuil magistrate, neither hereupon, because punishments doe not strayght way followe

D. i.

their

A Commentarie vpon the

Though punishment be deferred, yet it is not therefore taken away.

A profitable admonition to vngodly vsurers.

The spirituall punishment of vsurers though little esteemed of many, yet truly exceeding grievous.

Note.

their deedes, God himselfe not punishing by and by, but deferring the punishment by his wyle counsaile. For punishment is not therefore taken away bicause it is deferred, sith that the Lorde is wont with slownesse of vengeance to recompence the grievousnesse of punishment. God doth oftentimes mitigate the punishment for repentance sake, yet so, that he leauech euident testimonies of hys iudgement.

Wherefore I doe admonishe all Usurers that they doe speedily repent, and rather folow penitent *Zachaeus*, whose repentance the Gospel commendeth vnto vs, than *Judas*, who by his theft was at the last brought to hang himself. Although they doe litle feare the iudgement of God them selues, yet at the least let them take pitie vpon their children, least that the popson of Usurie which the parents do gather, be deadly vnto the very children. Let them knowe that it is a most true saying:

*The riches that with wrong are got,
to the thirde heire continue not.*

The spirituall punishment of Usurers although it be most grievous, yet many doe contemne it as ridiculous. For whosoever doth practise Usurie, he is without all doubt, out of the familie of God, out of the bodie of Christ. For howe can he be the member of Christ, which with Usurie killeth Christ in his members? Howe can he be counted to be of the familie of God, which fighteth vnder Satan: which mocketh and scorneth at the worde of God? Now they that are not of the bodie of Christ haue nothing to doe with the treasure of the Saints, which is farre more precious than all the riches of this worlde. What treasure can be greater than to possesse Christ? What riches more excellent than the inheritance of the kingdome of God? These treasures, these riches hath *Lazarus* being full of sores, & poore, but fearing God, which the rich glutton shall want for ever, and with him, as many as casting aside

Epistle of S. James. 58

aside the feare of God doe seeke after vniust gaine. What, I pray thee, is it, if thou be able with thy vsurie to gayne the riches of *Cresus*, and in the meane season to lose thine owne soule: O peruerse iudgement. Thou hast exceeding great care of this time which shall shortly come to an end, but there doth not so much as a thought come into thy mynde concerning the time to come, whereof there shall be no ende. I therfore, if my admonition may any thing preuayle, doe exhort all them which doe thinke verily that there is a God, which doe acknowledge God to be a iust iudge, and which do beleue that there is any lyfe remaining after these ashes, that they doe speedily repent, that when the Lorde shall come sooner than they thinke for, he may finde them apparelled with a wedding garment, and not with an hellish garment which they haue got vnto themselves by their vsurie.

Ecclesiasticall punishment agaynst vsurers was in time past of this sort: First they were not admitted to the solemne ceremonie of the offering. Also they were put back from the communion of the bodie and bloude of the Lord. Moreover, they were excluded from Christian buriall. This punishment agaynst Usurers was most grieuous, neuerthelesse, most iust. For first concerning the ceremonie of the offering, or the almes giuen to the vse of the ministers of the Gospell, or to the releewing of the poore, we must vnderstande that almes giuen of goodes gotten by Usurie is abhominable to God. For no sacrifices (for liberalitye toward the poore being rightly done, is a certaine kynde of sacrifice) can please God, but those which being iustly gotten, doe come from a pure mynde and right will, sayth Iohnning before. For this is most true, that no mans worke can please God, before that the mynde doth please him, but the mynde doth in no wyle please except it doth before in the spirite of sayth humble it selfe before God. Both of the is confirmed by this saying of *Esay. chap. 66.*

Qu.ii.

To

How vsurers were punished heretofore according to the censure of the Church.

Usurers were very iustly prohibited from the ceremonie of offering.

A Commentarie vpon the

To him will I looke (sayth the Lorde) that is humble and of a contrite spirite, and trembleth at my wordes. He that killeth a bullocke (to wit, without humilitie of spirit) is as if he slewe a man, he that sacrificeth a shepe, as if he cut of a dogges necke. By these wordes (that I may speake briefly) the Prophet signifieth, that to the vncleane all things are vncleane, and that nothing doth please God, but that which proceeding from the true feare of God, is done iustly and of them that be iust. But I see what is objected against me: Usurers, say some, doe professe one Christian sayth with vs, why therefore is it not lawfull for them to communicate with the godly in outwarde things onely? I graunt in dede that Usurers doe professe the Christian sayth with vs, but they doe that onely in wordes, and in the meane season they doe most wickedly denie it in their deedes, whereby it commeth to passe, that both their profession is abhominable befoze God, and also they themselves, such is their obstinacie and disobedience, are reprobate vnto euery good worke. Agayne, where as Usurers were put backe from the holy supper of the Lorde, it was most iust reason: For what participation haue swine with the bodie and bloude of Christ? what haue they to do with the meate of the childzen of God, which are the bond slaues of Satan? Giue ye not, sayth the Lord, that which is holy to dogges, neyther cast ye your pearles before swine. Howe, I pray you, is the table of the Lorde meete for them, who being filled with the foode of the deuill, that is, with Usurie, doe excessively abounde? Wherefoze the Ministers of the Gospel whosoever they be, that knowing and priue therevnto, do offer the most holy bodie and bloud of y^e Lord vnto Usurers, do not onely wickedly communicate with other mens sinnes, whereof they shall also at the length suffer the punishment: But also as much as in them is, they doe with sacrilege cast the body and bloude of the Lorde, into a most vile and filthie linke of Satan,

of

An obiection.

The aunswere

Usurers were in time past put backe from the holy communion, and that for most weightie causes & reasons.

Matth. 7. 6.

An admonition to the ministers of the Gospel.

of which wickednesse they shall in no wise auoyde the punishment. But thou wilt say, many which are as euill as Usurers doe come to the supper of the Lorde. I belecue this truly. For euen Judas also the brother of Usurers did come to the table of the Lord, but what did it profite him? did he not together with the breade swallowe the spirite of Satan, and that not through the fault of him that offred, but through his owne proper fault receyuing it? The Lorde truly offred saluation, but he infected with the venom of couetousnesse, did wickedly refuse that which the Lorde offered, and all that Satan gaue, he swallowed quite vp.

But concerning the punishment of Burial, the censure and iudgement of our auncetours did not want most iust reason. But this he shall best vnderstand, which shall perceiue the cause why we do solemnise the funerals of saints and holy men with ceremonies and obsequies. But what is the cause? The hope of a glorious resurrection. For it is a most worthy thing that we should bestow honest buriall vpon those bodies, which we hope in time to come shall be made like to the glorious body of Christ. For when we see the bodies of the saintes to be committed to the dust, we doe lift vp our mindes to him, which in time to come, the voyce of the Archangel going before, shall say: Arise ye dead. And to the dead being raised vp he shall giue the glorie of immortalitie. But now seeing that the vngodly, among whom are vsurers as the chiefe souldiers and hierlinges of Satan occuppying the first place shal rise againe, as Daniel witnesseth, to euerlasting ignominie and confusion, what godly man will iudge them worthe of the honour of Christian buriall? The 15. Psalme numbretch him among the godly *Who in his eyes despiseth a vile person, and honoureth them that feare the Lord*: How therefore shall he cause him to be buried in glorious and honorable buriall whom he doth abhorre? Ieremie forgettellet

D.iii,

thas

Usurers in time past wer excluded frō christian buriall, and that by the iust censure of the Church.

VVhy we solemnise the burials of holy men.

Reasons and testimonies wherfore vsurers haue bene excluded from christian buriall.

A Commentarie vpon the

Iere. 22. 19. that a tyranne shall be buried with the buriall of an Asse, and that by the iust iudgement of God: What shall we determine by the same iudgement of God concerning Usurers, which are crueller then any tyrannes? I doe not passe or esteeme though some champion doe falsly attribute vnto himselfe the spirite of prophecie and say, that it may come to passe, that many which are the enemies of Usurers may be buried with the buriall of an Asse, and in the meane time Usurers may be brought to buriall with great pompe, the bells ringing and torches caried light before them. I will make no other aunswere to these, but that euen as in the sighte of the Lorde the death of his saints is precious: so is their buriall also honourable before God. Wherefore that which we haue witnessed concerning the honest buriall of the Saints doth pertayne to Ecclesiasticall discipline, and not to the iudgement of God whose wayes are vnsearchable. What will here come to passe? whome shall I not haue resisters and striuers agaynst this most iust censure and iudgement of the Church? surely they wil not be wanting which with their colours and fayre gloses will mitigate the euill of Usurie. Many will crie (the Serpent which deceyued our first parentes, being their maister) that the lawe of Moses many yeares ago by the comining of Christ was repealed, made voyde, and abolished, and doth nothing pertayne to christian people, who enioy their libertie, & do not suffer themselves to be straitly bound with the prohibition of Moses. This speach truly is plausible, but it is repproued by the testimonie of the conscience. For they which paynt their couetousnes with this colour, being deceiued of their *do-mestickall Eve, which was miserably seduced by the serpent, doe fall headlong into their owne destruction, and deceyue themselves by their owne subtiltie. For these men doe not weygh aright the prohibition of Moses, neyther doe they conferre the forbidding of Usurie with
the

Psal. 116. 15.

With what
fayre gloses
some will seke
to diminishe
the heynous-
nesse of vsury.

* Their owne
naturall cor-
ruption.

Epistle of S. James. 60

the lawe of charitie as they shoulde doe, which if they did, they should plainly see that vsurie being established, the rule of charitie is ouerthrowne, which God will haue to be perpetuall. Seing therefore that charitie shall be abolished neither in this life nor in the life to come as much as pertayneth to the commaundement and will of God and obedience perpetually due to the same: who doth not see that Usurie, which is quite contrarie to charitie, is condemned? But of this thing sufficient. For before it was shewed of vs at large when we did intreate of the causes of forbidding Usurie, that the forbidding of Usurie did proceede from the lawe of charitie. Wherefore without al doubt they shalbe found naked before God the iudge, which vse this lease already perced through, to hide their filthines.

VWhere vsury is established, there charitie is ouerthrowne

Perhaps some will yet except and say: There is no iniurie done to him that is willing. He which doth humbly desire to borrow money of an Usurer, doth couenant to pay Usurie, not compelled thereunto, but willingly, therefore an Usurer which helpeth a man that humbly intreateth him, is not to be saide to doe against charitie. The principle from whence this reason is taken, is doubtfull, in as much as it fayleth in two partes, of which one is true, the other false. For euerie will is not without constraint and of it selfe, which we may easily see in examples. The wayfaring man doth willingly deliuer his treasure to the theefe, which he would not doe, if he did not feare the sword of the theefe. The mariner doth make losse of his marchandise and that willingly when shipwracke is at hand, but from whence I pray you, doth that will come? truly not of election or choice without constraint, but of feare of the shipwracke which is at hand. For the mariner doth therefore cast away his marchandise willingly leaste that he himselfe perish together with his marchandise. Wherefore, two euils being set before him, he will wil-

An obiection in the behalfe of vsurers.

The aunswer.

Euery will is not without constraint, as it is shewed by examples.

Q.iiii.

lingly

A Commentarie vpon the

lingly choose that euill which seemeth to be the lesse. After the same maner is the will of him that boroweth money vpon Usurie, affected concerning the couenant and promise to pay interest, which truly he promisseth willingly, which he would not doe, if he were not constrained by pouertie, therby to auoyde a greater euil.

Another objection in the behalfe of vsurers.

The answer.

Usurers are Idolaters, and why.

Usurie which some affirme to be the vpholding of families and common weales, is in deede in the ende oft times the vtter ruin of them.

Furthermoze where as some doe obiect that families and common weales cannot stand without Usurie: this surely I confes to be true in this corruption of the worlde and in the banishment of manly vertue which was in our auncetours. But from whence I pray you, commeth that commoditie by which thou criest that families & common weales are maintained? doth it come of Usurie? no truly. For no good thing can come of Usurie by it self, but rather a sea of euils. Now if perhaps any good seeme to come of Usury, that is not to be attributed to vsurie, but to the lending, which lending if it were done wout Usurie, it would moze profit families & common weales. But thou wilt say, thou lovest labour in speaking which goest about to call Usurers, being Idolaters (for Usurers in steede of God do worship riches as God) into the right way. But be it so, inasmuch as they as adders are deafe at y word of y Lord. For they heare nothing with so great indignatiō of mind as that their Usurie is condemned. That most filthie lucre is moze pleasant vnto them then that they would want it euen with any perill set befoze them. And surely hereupon it is, that not a few, which might liue welthily enough for the maner of their calling, of the profites of their owne land, doe sell their inheritance, that a certaine sume of money being scraped together and put out to Usurie, they may liue idely vpon their Usurie, and inuent diuers subtil deuises, by which they may hold their detters not without vsurie vpon vsurie, vntil they haue vterly vndone them, not without the exceeding great losse of families and common weales. But although these perhaps will not al-

low

Epistle of S. James.

61

low of our sentence, yet it is our duty to admonish them, that at the least they thinke that the day will come vnlooked for, in which they shall render an account to the iust iudge, who as he is corrupted with no accepting of persons, so is he deceiued with no sophistrie or subtiltie. And then at the length Usurers shall perceiue that we did aduertise them of good and profitable things, and that that heathen Poet Hesiodus did say true, who being no vaine Poet writeth after this sorte:

*Vse not ill meanes to gaine for gaine ill got
from verie losse and damage diffreth not.*

From whence had Hesiodus this: had he it out of the word of God which Usurers doe contemne? no truly. For that sillie man did not see at any time the writings either of the Prophets or of the Apostles. From whence therefore had he it? experience and nature being his teachers he set forth in writing this most true oracle verie well agreeing with the voyce of the Prophets and Apostles. With Hesiodus agreeth Pindarus that most auncient Poet of the Thebans, whom for his singular wisdom Alexander the great is sayde to haue embraced: for he saith thus much in effect:

*The mindes of men are redier,
to praise deceitfull gaine:
Then iustice to embrace and eke,
true dealing to maintayne:
Although they creepe to that sharpe daye,
their life being nigh spent:
When for vniustice done they shall,
receiue due punishment.*

That day, which shall follow the delightes and pleasures that the vngodly take of their vniust gaine, Pindarus calleth a day appoynted for punishment. For as in the next day after the festiuall dayes (in which the most part doe moze freely without consideration giue ouer themselves

R.i.

to

A Commentarie vpon the

to all kind of pleasures and delites) men are wont to call to remembrance wherein they did offend more licentiously through drunkenness : so the day of death and of the last iudgement shall be to Usurers as the next day after festiual dayes, in which they doe at the last repent them of their sinnes, but in vaine. For he is by no meanes thought truly to repent, which abstaineth from sin against his will. These thinges I thought good to write somewhat more at large, that I might aduertise Usurers of the wrath of God and of the punishment that hangeth ouer their heades, which they shall no way escape, except they doe repent in time, and for a testimony of their repentance do iustly restore againe, if they shall be able, that which they haue vniustly taken. But if they shall not be able, let them at the least doe what they can, let them craue of God pardon of their fault, let them aske them whom they haue hurt with their vsurie, forgiveness of the iniurie that they haue done, and let them be reconciled to the Church by publicke satisfaction, least that their portion be with Iudas. But if any shall contemne and deride these our counsels and admonitions, which I doubt not but it will come to passe, it maketh no matter to me. I seeke the saluation of wretched men, I tell out the truth which he that will not obey, shall in his time finde a iust iudge who will most iustly punish both his contempt and the contempt of his fauourers.

What vsurers ought to doe, to whom God hath giuen grace to repent and to forsake so detestable a sin.

Of the third.

*A*fter we haue now spoken of the prohibitions of Usurie and of the causes thereof, and also of the punishments of them, who despising the law both of God and of man doe practise Usurie which is prohibited: the place requireth that we see whether there be any contract or bargaine like vnto Usurie in part, yet not disagreeing with the charitie toward our neighbour, and if there be anye

nye such, how farre a godly man may vse the same with a good conscience and without offence to God. First of all this is to be helde as most certayne that Usurie condemned by the worde of God, is therfore unlawfull, prohibited and condemned because it is contrarie to the foundation which proceedeth from the lawe of charitie: that which thou wilt not haue done to thy selfe doe not thou to another. But that this our foundatiō is vnmoueable we haue declared before, where we haue layde the foundations of contracts and bargaines. For there we shewed that charitie is the scope and end of all duties in this humane societie. Of this foundation an vnmoueable consequent is concluded, that no contract is condemned which is not repugnant to the charitie toward our neyghbour. Wherefore if any such can be shewed, it shalbe without doubt accounted lawfull, although it shall appeare much like vnto Usurie. For it is not iust and meete that we doe condemne al profitable contractes and bargaines in a common weale vnder a pretence of Usurie, because of the likenes. And although many such contracts are wisely condemned of the lawyers, yet we will speake of them of which the greatest controuersie is, especially in this realme. But that we may iudge of these contracts without errour, and find out that which with a good conscience and without offending God it is lawfull to follow: it shall be needefull to speake of diuers sortes of men, that it may be vnderstand to whom we are bound to lend, and to whom we are not, for there Usurie is properly committed. Here the lawes of magistrates may determine of those thinges, which they shall wisely know to be good and profitable for the common weale. For this is to be marked as a profitable rule in the societie of man: that bargaynes allowed by the lawes and by the authoritie of the magistrate, that is, of a good and wise iudge or lawyer, are permitted to a christian man. For it is lawfull for a christian to be ciuil

No bargain is disallowed, which is not contrarie to charitie.

A profitable rule concerning bargains

R.ii.

ordinau.

A Commentarie vpon the

ordinances, & these ordināces are of force not only for reasons sake, but also because of the authoritie of y^e magistrate. Let a christian man therfore so instruct his conscience, y^e it may vnderstand y^e these things are permitted, because God doth allow lawes and magistrates, and will haue vs to vse ciuill ordinances, and in bargaynes let him be content with that meane, with that equalitie, that the lawes and the magistrates doe appoynt, except they doe playnely varye from the ten commaundements and from the law of nature. This rule doth first admonish vs, that we do iudge reuerently of y^e lawes and ordinances of a good magistrat. Secondly that we iudge not rashly & too sharply of y^e bargaynes which the lawes do approue. Now, as we haue purposed let vs see y^e orders and states of men. In the first state may be the poore and beggers, whiche being hindred with old age, or griened with sicknesse, or otherwise with some great calamitie oppressed, are not able to liue without the almes of other, no nor to make any gaine. To these we doe by bond owe the duties of charitie and almes. Wherefore we must giue vnto these without al expectation of recompence or dutie agayne, for the commaundements sake of God, and for charities sake, which by nature we owe one to an other. And this det is so necessary, that he that doth refuse to pay it, doth obstinately violate the commaundement of God, doth vngodly refuse to obey the precept of Christ, doth cruelly oppresse the members of Christ, doth wickedly reiect the lawe of charitie, and purchaseth vnto himselfe certayne destruction. Hereupon therfore it may easily be knowne, how necessarye a duty it is to giue almes, and to relieue with his abilitie those that doe in very deepe stand in neede. But because I see that there are many causes by which the most parte are hindred, whereby they are not occupied in this necessary and dutiful office, as in many there is a studie of couetousnes, ignorance of the prouidence of God, heathenish diffidence,

The dutie of
charity which
we owe to
the poore and
impotent.

Diuers causes
which hinder
men that they
are so slacke
in the necessary
dutie of gi-
uing almes.

diffidence, riot, abuse of thinges, to much folly, much unprofitable spending, and (alas) cruel unmercifulnes in the most parte, whereby it commeth to passe that they are not moued with the neede of them that be in miserie: I will here somewhat at large handle the place of almes and that for this purpose, that both the necessitie of our dutye, whereby we are bound to them that neede in deede, may be vnderstand, and also we being admonished, may more wyllingly and readly doe our dutie, and be made more liberall toward the poore.

VWhy he pur-
poseth to in-
treat of almes
more at large.

First therefore I will shew where almes is to be giuen and what are the kindes therof.

VWhat chiefe
poyntes he
meaneth to
handle con-
cerning almes

Secondly I will rehearse the causes, with which the godly ought to be stirred vp to giue almes.

Thirde I will note the affection of him that giueth almes, and I will also prescribe a maner and measure to be obserued in giuing almes.

Lastly I will intreate of the endes of almes which is godly bestowed, and of the fruite that commeth vnto them, that giue almes with a cherefull mind according to the commaundement of Christ.

Of Almes.

Who soeuer hath determined to giue almes, let him giue his almes in this order. First of all, let him be mercifull to himselfe, that is, let him giue the first almes to himselfe, which then is done when a man leauing his owne euill wayes, doth turne himselfe vnto the Lorde by true repentance. For no mercy (for so the word almes doth signifie) can be shewed of him, which as yet is not vnder the mercie of God. Wherefore Iesus the Sonne of Syrach doth well admonishe when he sayth, Chap. 30. *Haue mercie on thine owne soule pleasing God, and comfort thine heart: driue sorrowe farre from thee. When he sayth: Haue mercie on thy soule pleasing God, he sheweth in what thing that mercy doth consist, which we ought to*

VVe must be-
stow the first
almes vpon
our selues.

VVherien the
mercy consis-
teth which
we ought to
shew first to
our owne
selues.

R.iii.

shewe,

A Commentarie vpon the

shewe to our selues, to wit, in turning vnto God, and in
 fapth, without which it is vnpossible to please God. After
 this sort Abraham did begyn his almes, according to
 whose example all the rest of the godly haue begun their
 almes at them selues. To this pertayneth that saying of
Augustine: If thou wilt giue almes, begyn at thy selfe.
 For howe can he be mercifull to another which is cruell
 to himselfe? He that hath begon his almes after this ma-
 ner, will forthwith turne himselfe to his neighbour, and
 will shewe mercy vnto him. Herevpon riseth the first di-
 stinction of almes, that there is one kynde of almes which
 euery one bestoweth vpon himselfe, which is by nature
 the former, another which euery man giueth to other,
 which is by nature the latter. Nowe this latter may also
 be made to be of two sortes, one spirituall, another ciuill.
 That which is spirituall, pertayneth to the spirite, which
 he bestoweth, which calleth him into the right way that
 erreth from the folde of Christ, and bringeth him into
 Christes shepfold. There is no almes more diuine than
 this, none more profitable, finally, none more necessarie.
 For as the soule doth excell the bodie, so almes whereby
 the soule is refreshed, is by many degrees to be preferred
 before the almes with which the necessities of this frayle
 bodie are relieved, and as eternall good things are more
 to be esteemed than all the commodities of this lyfe which
 continue but a short time: so the almes which helpeth to
 the attayning of eternall life, is more to be esteemed, than
 the almes that serueth for this frayle life. There is great
 commendation hereof in Iames the Apostle, who sayth:
 Brethren, if any of you hath erred from the truth, and some
 man hath conuerted him, let him knowe that he which hath
 conuerted the sinner from going astray out of his way, shall
 saue a soule from death, & shal hyde a multitude of sins. Ci-
 uill almes doth belong to this present lyfe, to wit, when
 we being touched with pitie, doe succour the neede of the
 poore.

The first di-
 stinction of
 almes.

Two kindes
 of almes
 which is be-
 stowed vpon
 other.

Spiritual al-
 mes what it
 is, how diuine
 and passing al
 other kinds of
 almes.

James. 5. 19. 20.

Ciuill almes
 what it is.

Epistle of S. James. 64

poore. To epyther kynde of mercie Chryſt doth exhort vs by the example of his father, when he ſayth: Be ye mercifull, as your heauenly father alſo is mercifull. Let euerpe one remember this precept, which acknowledgeth Chryſt for his maiſter. Luke. 6. 36

The cauſes with which the godlye ought to be ſtirred vnto giue almes, are very many, among which theſe are the chiefe. The firſt cauſe is Chriſtianitie it ſelfe, or the profeſſion of Chriſtian religion. For this doth require, that we abounde in euerpe good worke, and that we embrace and cheriſhe one another as the members of one body, the head whereof is Chryſt. When this is done of faith in Chryſt, we doe, in the feare of God practiſe true chriſtianitie, that is, we do truly imitate the diuine nature. For ſeeing God, whom chriſtianitie biddeth vs follow, is rich in mercy, we by following his mercy are after a ſort layde to be followers of the diuine nature. But they that are not occupied in this following, doe falſly attribute to themſelues a chriſtian name. Furthermoze they are not counted the lawfull ſonnes of God but baſtardes rather. For God acknowledgeth none among his ſonnes, but whom he ſeeth at the leaſt to endeuour to imitate his fathers vertues. To this pertayneth that ſaying of the Lord in the Prophet. *If I be a father where is mine honour?* But the cheefeſt parte of honour, which children can doe to their parents, is to imitate their vertues. Whoſoeuer earneſtly looketh for the glorye of chriſtianitie, let him ſet befoze himſelfe this cauſe of ſhewing mercy to his neighbour, and let him not ſuffer himſelfe to be led away with euil examples from this neceſſary and due worſhip of God. Malac. 1. 6.

The ſecond cauſe is the commaundement of God, vnto which all creatures ought to obey. Of this cauſe Ieſus the ſonne of Sirach maketh mention, chap. 29: *Helpe the poore for the commandements ſake, and turne him not away* The ſecond cauſe which ought to moue vs to the giuing of almes.

R. iiii.

because

A Commentarie vpon the

because of his pouertie. And a litle after : Bestow thy treasure after the commaundement of the most high, and it shall bring thee more profite then Gold. Our treasure that doth neuer faile we must lay vp and keepe in heauen, but yet it is in this life bestowed vpon the poore, vpon whom the benefites that he bestowed the Lord so accepteth as if we had bestowed them vpon himselfe. All the testimonies of the Scripture which doe commend vnto vs the loue of our neighbour, doe require especially liberalitie towarde the nedie. For this is the chiefe part of true loue. Hereunto belongeth that saying of the Lord, Deut. 15. I commaund thee, saying, thou shalt open thine hand vnto thy brother that is needy. He that contemnech this precept of the Lord, how can he loue God? how can he feare him? for thus sayth Iohn : Whosoever hath this worldes good, and seeth his brother haue neede, and shutteth vp his compassion from him, how dwelleth the loue of God in him? And Iob 6. He that taketh away mercie from his neighbour, hath forsaken the feare of the Lord. Whosoever therefore determineth to loue God and to feare him from his heart, let him thinke that he doth owe obedience to God commaunding. Of which thing Micheas speaketh after this sort : I will shew thee, O man, what is good, and what the Lord requireth of thee, surely to doe iustly, and to loue mercy and to humble thy selfe to walke with thy God.

He cannot rightly feare the Lorde which is not mercifull to the poore.
1. Iohn 3. 17.

The third cause which ought to prouoke vs to be liberal in giuing almes.

The thirde cause is the imitation of examples, of Christ our Lord first, and then of his members. Christ was made poore for vs, that he might enrich vs. What therefore do we agayne, owe to the members of Christ? especially seeing he witnesseth that that is done to himselfe whatsoeuer we doe to the least of his members. Matth. 25. The holy fathers desired nothing more than to relieue the poore Saints. Abraham doth reuerence strangers, and biddeth them to eate with him, that he may shewe liberalitie vnto them. Lot desired the Angels to come into his house, whom

Epistle of S. James. 65

Whom he thought to be poore straungers. Cornelius the courtier is witten to haue giuen himselfe to continuall prayer and almes, which the scripture witnesseth to haue come by into remembrance before God.

The fourth cause is the dignitie and estimation of almes godly bestowed before God. Prouerb. 21. *To do mercie and iudgement is more acceptable to the Lorde then sacrifice.* Christ sayth *Matth. 9. I will haue mercie and not sacrifice.* Heb. 13. *To doe good and to distribute forget not: for with such sacrifice God is pleased.* So great dignitie, so great estimation is there before God, of the almes godly bestowed. It is preferred before sacrifice: God is sayd to be singularly moued and delighted therewith. This dignitie ought worthily to admonithe them which abounde in this worlde's good, that they indeuour, according to the counsell of Paule, to be rich in good workes.

The fift cause is our neighbour himselfe. But that euery man is neighbour one to another, the Parable of the Samaritane doth teach, although this neighbourhode is greater with some than with other some. Euery man both godly and also vngodly is neighbour vnto me, and that first by reason of our creation. Secondly for likenes sake. Thirdly in respect of our common life and humane societie. And although this triple bonde wherewith men are bounde among themselves, is a great cause wherefore men ought to doe good vnto men: neuerthelesse there is yet a farre greater bonde wherewith Christians are knit together with Christians. For first one vocation is common to all Christians, whereby we are called to the vnitie of spirit in the bonde of peace. Agayne, by the same spirit we are begotten agayne to be the sonnes of God, whereby it cometh to passe that both we haue one father which is God, and also we are brethren among our selues. Moreouer, we are members of the same mysticall bodie, the heade whereof is Christ. Finally, we haue the same hope

The fourth cause which ought to stirre vs vp diligently to distribute our almes to the poore.

Almes rightly bestowed is a thing much accepted and esteemed before God.

The fift cause of giuing almes.

A triple bond wherewith all men are ioyned in neighbourhode one with another.

Other exceeding neare bonds wherewith Christians are knit together, which also ought not a little to moue vs vnto liberrall almes toward our needy brethren.

S. J.

of

A Commentarie vpon the

of the glorie to come, for we are heyres of eternall lyfe in Chyist Iesus our Lorde. If we doe earnestly thinke vpon this fist cause of mercie towarde our neighbour, there is none that doth not acknowledge howe necessarily liberalitie is to be shewed to them that be in neede. I do not make mention of that bond by which al men in this world are debtors one to another. Who wil seme to be a contemner of the vnitie of the spirite, whereunto the Gospell calleth vs? Who can abide to heare that he is a denier of spirituall brotherhoode? Who dare so despyse the members of Chyist, that he will suffer them to be tormented wth colde, hunger, and nakednesse? Who will not worthily suffer him to be partaker with him of the things of this world which soone fade awaye, whom he assuredly thinketh shall be heyre with him of the heauenly treasures? If this cause of liberalitie and mercie were esteemed of many according to the worthinesse thereof, they woulde not set their mindes so much vpon decepte and vniust gayne, they woulde not so much spoyle and rob the needie members of Chyist, and they would thinke more of cherishing and making much of their owne fleshe. As often as we see any that is in miserie crauing our helpe and succour, let vs, I pray you, remember the saying of Esay: Hide not thy selfe from thine owne flesh.

Eccl. 38.7.

The sixt cause that ought to moue vs to giue almes, is the sundrye punishments which shall light vpon them that are vmerciful toward the poore.

The sixt cause is the punishment, yea and that manifold of them which are hard toward the poore. The first is the wrath of God, Ecclesiasticus 4. Turne not thine eyes aside from the poore, because of anger. The second is the curse. In the same place it is sayd: For if he curse thee in the bitterness of his soule, his prayer shall be heard of him that made him. The third is the refusing of thy prayer which thou makest in thy necessitie. Prouerb. 21. He that stoppeth his eare at the crying of the poore, he shall also crye and not be heard. A horrible punishment truly, then which none can be more grievous: and it is no maruel that he

is

is not heard of God, which doth not heare the Sonne of God crying in his members. The fourth is a depriuing them of their giftes. For it is written: From him that hath Matth. 25. 29. not, euen that he hath shalbe taken away. But he is sayde not to haue, which doth not vse his giftes and goods to the glozie of God, and the relieuing of them that be in miserie. To this pertaineth that saying, Prouerb. 3. He that despiseth the prayer of the poore shall suffer pouertie. The fifth is the begging of their children, or their most wicked life which is farre moze grievous then all neede and pouertie. I haue spoken of the punishments of them that are cruell toward the poore, and that not out of philosophie which may erre, but out of the verpe oracles of God, which cannot deceiue or lye. He that shall contemne these, shall in short time finde a iust iudge. Now we will speake of affection, of what sort we require it to be in him which hath purposed to giue almes, and of the due and conuenient maner of almes. Christ will haue two vices to be excluded from almes Two things diligently to be taken he is of ingiuing almes. *Matth. 6.* which are hypocrisie and vaine glozie. For these two doe as pernicious poysons, infect whatsoeuer they touch. Neyther is that any maruel. For where hypocrisie is, there is no fayth: where vaine glozie is, there is no loue of God, no feare of God. Let therefore pharisaicall Hypocrisie and foolish boasting be farre of from our almes. What affections then do you require in almes: loue of God, charitie of our neighbour, sincere gentlenesse and cherefulnesse. For with these affections as with a certaine heauenly salt, our almes ought to be sprinkled, whereby it ought to be a sacrifice acceptable to God. Furthermore, with almes fayth is to be ioyned, by which we doe not only assure our selues that our almes doth please God, but also that he hath a care ouer our whole lyfe, that he doth furnishe vs with necessary defence and liuing. And bicause he requireth that we should helpe others, and hath promised rewardes, we shall for

S.ii.

Gods

A Commentarie vpon the

Quantitie in
almes how to
be considered.
Tob. 4.9.

Equalitie in
almes.

Readines and
chearefulnes
in giuing
almes.

Vpon whome
especially al-
mes is to be
bestowed.

Prouer. 3. 16.

The endes of
godly almes
are foure.

2. Cor. 9. 8.

Gods sake bestowe benefices, and agayne by fayth looke for the help of God. In y^e maner of our almes we shall consider the quantitie, according to the counsell of Tobias, who sayth: If thou hast much, giue plenteously, if thou hast little, doe thy diligence gladly to giue of that little: Equalitie, that thou of bounden dutie doe bestowe thy almes on the needy, and he agayne with a thankful minde receyue it and wishe well vnto thee: Readynes of mynde, according to that saying of Paule. 2. Cor. 8. If there be a willing minde, it is accepted according to that a man hath, and not according to that he hath not. Difference of strangers and them that be of the housholde of fayth, according to the counsell of Paul Gal. 6. While we haue time, let vs do good vnto all men, but especially vnto them, which are of the housholde of fayth, that is, them which by fayth are in the same familie of God that we be: Possession, according to the saying of Salomon: Let thy fountaines flow forth, but be thou maister of them.

Nowe it remaineth that we speake of the endes of godly almes, and of the fruite thereof. And although both the endes, and also the fruite of holy almes may easily be gathered of those things which go before, yet that I maye the more stirre by the godly reader to this necessarie, holy, and dutifull office, I will adde somewhat of the endes and fruites of almes godly bestowed. The ends are foure: The first, the relieuing of our needy neighbour, and the refreshing of the members of Christ. The seconde, the prouoking of others to liberalitie toward the pooze, according to that saying: 2. Cor. 9. Your Zeale hath prouoked many. The thirde, the witnessing of our fayth and of the feare of God. For the duties of charitie are directed vnto this ende, that by them we doe witnes that we feare God, whose commaundement we obey. The fourth, the glorie of God. Diuers and manifolde fruites do followe liberalitie towardes the pooze. Paule witnesseth that it will come

come to passe that they which haue bene liberall and bountifull toward the poore, shall abounde in euery good worke. For so it pleaseth the Lorde to recompence obedience toward him with newe graces. And this is it which the Lord sayth *Matth. 6.* The Lord shall reward thee openly.

And *Psal.* Blessed is he that iudgeth wisely of the poore : *Psal. 41. 1.*

the Lorde shall deliuer him in the time of trouble. Salomon:

He that hath mercie vpon the poore, lendeth vnto the Lorde. *Prover. 19. 17.*

Paule sayth : He that soweth liberally shall reape also liberally. *Esay. 58.* If thou poure out thy soule to the hungry, and refresh the troubled soule : then shall thy light spring out in the darkenesse, and thy darkenesse shall be as the noone day. *Ecclesiasticus. 29.* Lay vp thine almes in thy secret chambers, and it shall keepe thee from all affliction, it shall fight for thee against thine enimie, better than the shielde of a strong man, or speare of the mightie. Here the wise man calleth the necessities of our neighbours secret chambers, in which benefites are to be layde by and kept, wherevpon one of the holy fathers hath sayde elegantlye and well : the hande of the poore is a treasure house of Christ. Then the wyle man addeth the exceeding great fruite of the bounteousnesse layde by in those secret chambers to be deliuerance from euils, and a most strong fortresse and defence agaynst our enemies. For a man can by nothing be more defended & protected against perils, than by bounteousnes & mercie. But I speak of such almes which proceedeth of fayth, as it sufficiently appeareth by those things that I haue before spoken, least that any man think that I agree with the Papistes, which value their almes without Christ, and without fayth. These things concerning liberall and godly almes, I thought therfore to adde, that I might admonithe especially them that are of the richer sort, of their dutie, that they may vnderstande that they are bounde by the law of God to bestow part of their substance vpon the poore, and that freely for the comman-

S.iii.

dements

A Commentarie vpon the

dements sake of God, and for many other causes which I haue rehearsed. Furthermore that, if they shall refuse to obey the commaundement of God, they may know that they are guiltie of disobedience toward God. Of these thinges that is playnly concluded which I propounded, to wit, that none may without great sacrilege take gaine of this * first kind of men. In the second order or state of men I place artificers, and those which get their liuing with the labour of their handes. To these, according to the precept of Christ, we must lend, and looke for nothing a- gayne. For as the Apostle forbiddeth to giue vnto these freely when he sayth: *He that laboureth let him eat.* As charitie dooth not require that we shoulde giue of our goods freely to them that are strong and able to labour: so if necessitie vrging them, they desire to borrowe any thing of thee, obey the rule of Christ and lend without looking for a recompence in the like or in any other kind of dutie. The reason of the rule is, because that they, which in the sweate of their browes and in the labour of their handes doe gette their liuing, are wont to gaine little more then their liuing and their clothing. If such therefore should be grieued with Usurie, they should be plainely oppressed, not without the greates hurt of common weales and families, and so the foundation of the contractes and bargaines which we haue layd before, should be utterly ouerthrowne. But I cannot with silence passe ouer what I iudge most iustly to be found fault with in this kind of men. For beside that many of this sorte of men doe seeme to haue cast aside the feare of God, I iudge thre most grieuous vices to be restrained in them, which are: more then barbarous drinkeing, excesse of apparrell altogether vnmeet for this kind of men, and fraude and false dealing in their workmanship and labour. Many artificers & workmen, whatsoeuer they gayne the whole weeke, this on the holy dayes they spend in drinkeing, hauing no regard of their

* That is, such as eyther through po- uertie, age, or for some o- ther cause are not able to helpe them- selues.

How we must behaue our selues in len- ding to arti- ficers and labourers.

Three great faults in many artificers and labourers.

The first fault founde in ar- tificer and workmen.

Epistle of S. James. 68

their silly wyues or of their pooze childe. Whereby it falleth out, that artificers and workemen doe more often want, and are more often constrayned to borrow. If such were restrayned by lawes and by punishment, it should be better provided not onely for them but also for the common weale. If any thing be remayning more then wil suffice for their drinking, this they turne into excesse of apparel. For a man may see often times a peltmonger or a shoemaker or some other craftes man to be more finely appareled, then a Knight hath bene when I was a childe, when as yet the noble vertue of our auncetors was in any estimation. They are not contented with common cloth, which was very much set by among our elders, but they imitating noble men and princes, doe seeke for garments of silke. And they whose abilitie doth not permit that, doe gard the hemmes of their sleeves and skirts of their garments with cleane silke, that as by a certayne signe or token they may bewray the pride of their mind. Here I iudge the magistrate to offend most grievously which doth not restrayne this lightnes with lawes and punishment. Here perhaps wil rise by agaynst me some prating workman & will except after this sort: What? is it not lawfull for me to vse my owne thinges as it shall please me? am I not maister of mine owne thinges? A seemelines is to be kept in euery kind of life, wherfore it is in no wise lawfull for thee to abuse thy thinges contrary to that which becometh thee, which if thou shalt do, it is the dute of the magistrate, that he do correct thee & teach thee what kind of apparell doth become a shoemaker or a peltmonger. Thou thinkest that thou art made more trimme and commendable before men with thy ornaments of silke: but wise men doe iudge farre otherwise of thee. For of the excesse of apparell they do gather an excessiue and a riotous minde. What shall I say of the fraude and false dealing of workemen? what of their newe colours, wherwith they

S.iiii.

doe

The seconde fault.

He speaketh not of our countrie Englande, but of his owne countrie Denmarke, whether the same may be sayde of our countrie, that I leaue to the iudgement of others.

An obiection.

The aunswer.

The thirde fault in many artificers and workemen.

A Commentarie vpon the

doe paynt and set forth their workes? who doth not com-
playne of the deceit of artificers and workemen? Let me
speake somewhat more freely what I thinke. In euerye
kinde of trade they haue a gods name, their ouerseers af-
ter the maner of the auncient Athenians. But what I
pray you, doe these ouerseers? there are perhaps some a-
mong the, which, that they may receiue part of the gaine
or may get of them those thinges that are necessarie for
them at a lower price: will winke at many faultes of the
workemen (which they ought to correct, if they would
rightly execute the office of ouerseers) hauing little re-
gard of the helth of the body, that is of the common weale.
It is the dutie therfore of wise gouernoures, that they
bring into order both the artificers them selues and also
their ouerseers or assistents. That which I haue sayde of
shoomakers and peltmongers, I will haue to be vnder-
stand of all workemen and labourers whose occupation
and practise is necessarie in the common weale.

Very vniust
vsury practi-
zed among
husbandmen.

In the third order or state of men may husbandmen be
placed, who also doe get their liuing with the labours of
their handes. If these did there dutie in the feare of God,
and tilled the earth diligently, truly they should lesse stand
in neede, especially they which haue but small fields. For
the earth which they labour doth render with increase
that which it receiueeth, so as the labour of the husband
man be watered with the feare of the Lord. Among this
kind of men most vniust Usurie is vsed, and such Usurie
truly as the Turkes and other prophane heathen would
without dout abhorre. Some man peraduenture boroweth
a quarter of graine in the time of sowing, but with a co-
uenant, that eyther he restore the same double at the
peares end to him of whom he borrowed it, or els that he
sowe of his owne charges freely so much as he borrowed.
I speake not of the vsurie of money, which is farre more
vniust then the former. It behoueth the goodly magistrate

to

Epistle of S. James. 69

to correct this vniustice, and it is the dutie of godly pa-
stours to prouoke the husbandmen to doe pleasures and
good turnes one to another without all vsurie in the feare
of the Lorde, and to paynt out that cursed vsurie in it co-
lours, that they maye learne to eschue it as a certayne
plague or pestilence. I woulde wishe also in this state of
men both excelle of apparell to be restrayned, and also vn-
profitable expences at mariages, and at the birth of their
chilozen. For it is wont oftentimes to come to passe that
they are destitute of things necessarie, which forgetting
the maner of their state, doe not keepe a meane.

In the fourth state of men may be placed nice and deli-
cate yong men, of whome Horace writeth in this maner:

Nice and deli-
cate yong
men.

The yong man not yet ripe in yeares,

from keeper once set free:

Doth set delight in horse and dogges,

and in greene fieldes to be:

Soone led to vice, is sharpe to them

that warne him as his frends:

For profite slowly doth prouide,

in waste his mony spendes.

Is loftie eke and conetous,

and soone doth that forsake:

Which he once loued, and wherein

his pleasure he did take.

To this order therefore I thought good to adde the wel-
thier yong men, which are not yet married, whether they
be noble, or the sonnes of citizens, who being nowe set
free from their tutors & gouernours of their maners, are
caried more freely according to the lust of their minde. It
often falleth out with these, by reason of their prodigall
spending of things (for it is wont to come to passe for the
most part, that they which are borne vnto welch, or come
easily by it, are more wastfull of their things) doe desire
to borrowe money of others. But how we must deale with

T. i.

these

A Commentarie vpon the

these I will declare, when I shall first shew what I finde wanting in them, & what I would haue to be reformed in the. Although I feare y^e the same wil happen to me, which in time past chaunced to the Hares that gaue lawes to the lions, neuertheles y^e truth is to be preferred before al peril. If it be not a few which are of good towardnes are marred with euil bringing vp, & get those vices from their tender yeares, which all their age after doe for the most part accompanie them. If or whē parents do eyther too much coker their children, or by their owne example allure them to naughtinesse, or neglect due instruction, what other thing, I pray you, can come to passe, than which we see in trees, which from the beginning being neglected, become crooked and vnfruitfull. Contrariwise, they that are pruned, erected and watered with the hande and cunning of the husbände man, are made streight, fertile, and frutefull. But howe much it skilleth to accustome from tender yeares, *Lycurgus* taught his *Lacedemonians* by this example: he tooke in hand to bring vp two whelps which came of the same syre and damme, of which one he suffered to be pampered and well fedde, the other he applyed to hunting. These thus brought vp, he brought vnto the commō theater or stage of the *Lacedemonians*, and placed them in the middlest thereof, and together in the sight of the whelps he set a pot of fleshe and a liue Hare. This being done, he let them both lose, the *Lacedemonians* beholding him, of which the one with great vehemencie runnech after the Hare, the other thrusteth his heade into the fleshe pot. But when the *Lacedemonians* marueyled, what this sight did meane, *Lycurgus* aunswereth: both these whelpes came of the same syre and damme, but you see the one giuen to the belly, the other to be delighted with hunting. This diuers disposition is long of the bringing vp. Know ye therefore, O ye *Lacedemonians*, that the maner of lyfe, education, and custome, are of great importance to vertue. The
ancient

In bringing
vp is a cause
of marring
many, which
are of a good
towardnes
and wit.

An apt simi-
lude.

How much
bringing vp
preuaileth ei-
ther vnto ver-
tue or vice it
is declared by
an excellent
example.

Epistle of S. James.

70

ancient Crates also ascending the highest part of the citie did wisely cry out: whither are ye caried O ye citizens: is it meete that you should be wholly occupied in getting riches, and to be nothing carefull for your children, for whose sake riches are gottē? Beleeue me, saith he, there can none more precious and better heritage be left vnto your children, then if they be well brought vpp from their tender age, and be rightly instructed vnto vertue from their infancye. This patrimony remaineth with them continually nothing at all subiect to the stormes and troubles of fortune. But I see two especiall causes why certayne parents doe more negligently prouide that their children be instructed, to much cockering and nigardship.

Good education a most profitable patrimony.

Two things which much hinder good education.

In cockering mothers doe more often offende, and especially those which haue not very many children. These do like as if some husbandman shoulde refuse to till his fielde because he hath but one only. Who could suffer this mans folly and peruersenesse of iudgement: is it not much more to be tilled because it is onely one? It is so truly, that the profite and increase of one may recompence the want of many: After the same sort I iudge it to be the dutie of mothers, so much more diligently to bring vpp their children, by howe much they are fewer. But I see what doth let mothers, they loue their children more dearely than that they can suffer them to be an houre out of their sight, but it is cruell loue so to loue their children, that they shoulde be as it were giuen ouer of their mothers vnto all naughtinesse, of which peruerse and cruell loue, not a fewe shall suffer the iust punishment, which with great griefe of mynde and with teares shall be compelled to see the vnbidded wantonnesse and vngaciousnesse of their children, vnto which they doe nowe all to late go about to prouide a remedy.

A very apt similitude.

The fewer the children the more diligently to be cared for that they be well brought vp.

Cruell loue in many mothers that thinke them selues to loue their children most dearely.

On the other side niggardship is oftentimes greater, than that parents will bestowe the coste. Whatsoeuer is

The second cause which hindreth

C.ii.

spere

A Commentarie vpon the

good educa-
tion.

The discom-
moditie of e-
uill bringing
vp is properly
shewed.

spent vpon horse breakers, or horse keepers, fooles, min-
strels, dogs, &c. that they thinke wel bestowed, but if they
see any thing to be spent about instructing their children,
they thinke all that yll bestowed, and are much more care-
full that an horse be wel framed to vaunting and leaping,
than that their childe be well instructed to vertue. *Plu-
tarch* declareth a very goodly hyfforie making hereunto :
Aristippus. sayth he, being demaunded of a certayne foo-
lish father howe great a rewarde he woulde aske for in-
structing his sonne, answered, a thousande grotes. This
aunsweere being hearde, the father with indignation cry-
eth out : O good God, sayth he, I can buye a bondman
or slaue for a thousande grotes, to whom *Aristippus* : buy,
sayth he, a bondman, and so thou shalt haue two bond-
men, both the seruant whom thou hast bought, and the
chylde whom thou hast begot : signifying that the mindes
of children, honest discipline being neglected, doe become
seruile, and open vnto all naughtinesse. For the *Doct*
truly sayth :

The vntild and neglected field,

the fruiteles fearne for fruite doth yelde.

For so it is altogether, if thou leaue a field vntilled, thou
shalt find it to haue plentifully brought forth fearne and
thistles : after the same sort, if thou shalt leaue the wites of
children vnlooked vnto and vnerercised, thou shalt reape
most abundant fruite of wantonnes and ungraciousnes.
We haue what be the beginninges of vnbridled and wan-
ton youth, wherevnto afterward come the verpe euill ex-
amples of them which are taught after the same manner.
What other thing I praye you, can be looked for here,
then that which is reported of a certaine kinde of chalkie
clay, which as *Plinie* saith, hath so great affinitie with
the fire, that the flame doth passe vnto it from what place
soeuer it be seene : for whatsoeuer vice is in others whose
acquaintance they vse, this commeth vpon them as a cer-
taine

rayne flame, and if there be any vertue left, it consumeth it, so greates a nourishing of all naughtines and vnbrideled sensualitie is the acquaintance and conuersation of euill men. In this felowship, vertue being banished they begin to strue who shall passe other in pleasure. Here it is a goodly thing to contend in drinke and to ouercome. It is thought to be greater glorie not to be ouercome in quaffing, then valiantly to drine backe the enemy. They that ouercome in this struing are no lesse praised then Achilles was in time past, because he ouercam Hector in a singular combat. Briefly, according to the saying of Esay, they shew them selues men in drunkenness, and so they carie away the spoyle of Sarmacia without bloude and sweat. There is also an other kind of struing wherein one contendeth to ouercome an other in vanitie, in strāgenes, in price and excelle of apparell. Here when none wilbe the last, O good God, what vnprofitable expences are made? as this struing is exceeding gainefull to marchantes: so is it a most ready way to empty the purses of vnwise men. I say nothing of other struings not worthy to be remembred, vnto which there are no small charges required. What at the last will here come to passe? their purses being emptied, they runne vnto their friends, they desire to borowe mony, that nothing may be wanting to the souldiers of Epicure. Here if any denie that which is asked, he getteth vnto himselfe an enemy, if he lende, he addeth oyle to fire. What, I pray you, must a godly man doe here? ought he to giue mony freely vnto these, or ought he to lende it them? No wise man will giue it freely, because almes is due not to riot, not to drinke, not to dyce, &c. but to necessitie. Parents and kinsmen which will seeme here to be more liberall, and do minister mony which is the instrument of naughtines, to them y aske it, doe as it were reach a sword vnto a mad man. Dought they to lende these any thing? No truly. For thou art bounde

Contending
who shall
passe one an
other in quaf-
fing and
drunkenness.

Contending
in vanitie and
excesse of ap-
parell.

How we must
behaue our
selues in len-
ding to them
which are
prodigall and
riotous.

To lend a pro-
digall man
money is to
reach a sword
in to a madde
mans hand.

C.iii.

by

A Commentarie vpon the

*¶ We must not
lend mony to
prodigal per-
sons.*

by no lawe neyther of God, nor of nature nor of man to lend money to them, which abuse it to their owne destruction, yea thou doost not a little offend if thou doe it. For he that hath giuen an occasion of losse, seemeth to haue giuen the losse, wherefore he is made guiltie of an other mans fault, as though his owne proper burthen were not enough for him. For when these nice and delicate yong men doe find where they may readily borow money vpon Usurie, they spend more prodigally, till their substance being quite wasted they be brought vnto pouertie not without shame and reproch to the familie whereof they come. Wherefore sithence it is profitable also to the common weale that honest and especially noble and auncient families be mayntained, he doth not a little offend against the common weale, who by lending doth giue occasion of better decay of honest families. Wherefore let a wise and godly man be nothing moued with the offence of these light men, neither let him communicate with other mens faultes, neither let him giue occasion of greater spending, but let him feare God rather and helpe them by lending vnto them, whome the Lorde commaundeth to be holpen.

¶ Vnto the first order or sort of men they may be referred, which are come to their full and perfect age, whose studie of life the Poet describeth in these verses.

The manly minde and age now ripe,

olde studies doth forsake:

And frendship, welth and honour eke,

to get it meanes doth make.

*¶ What men of
full and per-
fect age are
most com-
monly encli-
ned vnto.*

These leauing the fond toys of youth, as the Poet witnesseth, are occupped with newe studies: they seeke riches, they desire frendship, they are tickled with honour. Who if they would enter into a iust trade of life, and call their libertie to an account, they should haue sufficient to mayntaine their state. But they being not contented with
their

their meane state doe seeke after higher matters, and ha-
 uing no regard of the meanes of their calling they strepne
 them selues to doe greater thinges then their abilitie doth
 beare. Such therfore whē as they are destitute of fethers,
 neuertheles they enterprise to strue with the egle in fly-
 ing: they had neede some otherwhere to borow fethers,
 which they them selues haue not at home. What I praye
 you, is more fond or foolish then these? what is more un-
 aduised or rashe? they see other much richer then them-
 selues to weare costly garments. What doe our countrey
 men heare? y they may not seme lesse noble thē they, they
 desire to borow mony vpon Usurie, that they may haue
 wherby they may maintaine and increase their braverie.
 They maruel at the sumptuous houses of others, in which
 thing when they will not giue place to them that are of
 the richer sorte, they must by all meanes seeke to get mo-
 ney wherby they may build the like houses. Should they
 not doe much better if measuring themselves by their
 owne foote, they did prepare a nest fit and agreeable for
 themselves and for their chickens? Were it not a ridicu-
 lous thing if the Larke seing the nest of the Swanne,
 should make an account that the like were to be prepared
 for her selfe. There is reported a very pretie saying of
 Frances King of the Frenchmen concerning the house of
 a certayne noble man builded and set forth sumptuouslye
 and after a princely sort. For when as the King was
 brought into the house, and the noble man did looke for the
 Kinges voyce concerning the sumptuousnes of the build-
 ing: at the last the King being asked his iudgement of
 the house, answered, that al things were faire and sump-
 tuous, but that it was to greate a nest for so little a byrde.
 The King did very well truly and sufficient wittily in
 fewe wordes reprehend the folly of the man, and also by
 his aunswere admonished, that it behoueth euery man to
 abide within the limites of his state and calling, be-

C.iiii.

yond

We must not
 presume a-
 boue our abi-
 litie.

A worthy say-
 ing of Frances
 King of the
 frenchmen,
 wherein is
 shewed that
 we must
 not goe
 beyond the li-
 mites of our
 state

A Commentarie vpon the

pond or beside which nothing can well consist.

He describeth
at large the
presumptuous
prodigalitie
of diuers of
his owne
country men
the Danes,
but all other
who soeuer
that be in the
same fault,
may be ther-
by also admo-
nished.

They doe furthermore behold others to weare great chaynes of gold as tokens of their nobilitie and authority to whom if they be not made like euen in this thing, they thinke that there honour is ill provided for. What must they needes doe heare? their abilitie is more slender then that it doth suffice to bye so costely and greate chaynes: wherfore they must seke to borrow gold some other where, for which eyther their fermes are to be morgaged, or money is to be borrowed vpon vsurie. For no man giueth vnto them freely, no man ought to lend them for naught. For free lending, as Christ witnesseth is due only to them that neede. Ecclesiasticus. 29. Lend vnto thy neighbour in the time of his neede. Here the wise man doth playnly re- straine the dutie of lending vnto the time of neede. Here vpon it falleth out that sometimes their rents are scarce sufficient to pay the vsurie. The husband first wearing a chayne doth in bayne desire the friendly countenance of his wife, before shee also be adorned with chaynes and other innumerable ornaments. Then the daughters seeking to haue the like trimming and decking that their mother hath, doe not ceasse to prouoke their father by intreatie, till they also weare chaynes.

They see moreover in the families of great personages noble and honourable furniture, in which thing they doe not suffer themselves to be the last. Here gilded cuppes, costely wynes, precious hanginges of houses and sumptuous ornaments must be gotten. These thinges being gotten, great feasts are made that this excellencie and brauerie may be knowne vnto others. There are also in this sort of men who being not content with their fermes and fields whereupon they might liue honestly enough according to their state, doe thinke of the bying of other mens fields and searmes, that they may leaue their children a greater patrimonie, but when these also doe want abilitie they

Epistle of S. James. 73

they must seeke mony some where or other, that they may haue wherewith to suffice their auarice. What shall he doe here which hath mony, wherewith he is able to satisfie their desire? Perhaps it will be an vnciuile thing to deny, and to giue frely or to lend, neither the law of God, nor the rule of charitie doth compell thee. What therfore wilt thou say, shall I do? He knoweth þ I haue mony, which if he shal not receiue, he wil cry out that he is forsaken of his friend, and so by denyng that which is asked, for a friend I get to my self an enemy. Is it lawfull therfore for me, for þ benefit of lending to couenant for vsury, especially seing þ I do not owe to him that asketh neyther by Gods law nor by the law of nature, that which he asketh? I owe almes to the poore by the law of God and of nature. To him that needeth, but is strong and able to thriue with that he borroweth, I ought to lende by Gods lawe and by the lawe of nature. Here if I doe not render that which I owe, I do offende, and if I aske a rewarde for my bounden dutie, I breake the rule of Christ, and peruert the lawe of nature. But here I am not bounde neyther by Gods lawe nor by the lawe of nature. Wherefore if here I shewe any benefite which is not due, what forbiddeth that I may not bargain to haue a rewarde for my benefit? and according to the receyued custome, to receyue fine of the hundred euery yeare? I say that Usurie is not here properly committed, because that this benefite was free, wherevnto thou wast not bounde neyther by the lawe of God nor of nature. For Usurie condemned by the worde of God is properly committed, when for the lending which thou owest freely by the lawe of God and of nature, thou requirest some thing more then the principall for the bounden dutie of lending. Hereunto pertayneth the rule of Gerson: Euery contract or bargayne, which by it owne kynde, or by the circumstances ought to be free, if a couenant of receyuing more than the principall, commeth betweene, it is named Usurie.

All taking of more than the principall is nor condemned, neyther properly to be called vsurie.

VWhen it is vsurie to take more than the principall, and when it is not vsurie.

U. i.

rie,

A Commentarie vpon the

rie, and properly such only is named Usurie. Of this rule of Gerson it followeth, that it is not a bargaine of Usurie, which by the circumstances ought not to be free. Wherefore if I take any thing according to the appointment and limitation of the lawes, for the benefite of lending which is not due, that there may be equalitie, I doe not commit Usurie. I owe almes to the poore, I ought to lende to the needie. Wherefore? Bicause the ordinance of God and the lawe of nature doth require this. But to him that needeth not I ought of dutie by no lawe to lende. If therefore I deale or bargayne with him, a couenant being made betwene vs concerning receyuing somewhat moze than the principall, Usurie is not properly committed, especially if the equalitie be kept which the Magistrate hath appointed. Wherefore in this kynde of dealing I allow the sentence of D. Aepinus, who wryting vpon the 15. Psalm, rehearseth thre sortes of men, to wit, of beggers, of them that doe in very deede stande in neede (who notwithstanding are able to thriue with the mony that they borowe) and of them which are welchie, and haue whereupon they might liue honestly with their familie so that they were content with their meane. Of these thre kindes of men Aepinus doth learnedly dispute, and at length concludeth, that in the thirde kynde Usurie is not committed, so that otherwise there be no departing fro equalitie. Now it is naturall equitie that for a benefite, which by right we doe not owe, a benefite be rendred, that there may be equalitie. Concerning this equalitie, the determination of the Magistrate is to be hearde. The King of most commendable memorie Christierne the third, did prouide by a law, that no man shoulde receyue aboue fve euery yeare of the hundred. These limites and bondes he that doth passe, departeth from equalitie. But I woulde haue the godly alwayes to haue certayne sure aduertisements in their sight, which a little after I will annere.

It is naturall
equitie to ren-
der one good
turne for ano-
ther.

In

Epistle of S. James. 74

In the sixt order of men I place marchauntes, to wit
 them, which haue not so great substance whereby they are
 able to maintayne themselves honestlye, but doe liue by
 trade of marchandise, and doe get gayne by the chaun-
 ging, carying out and byrning in of things, whereby of-
 ten times they doe not a little gayne. It falleth out often
 with these, that they seeke to borowe mony, without which
 they cannot exercise their meane trade of marchandise.
 Here it is demaunded whether it be lawfull for the credi-
 tour to couenant for vlturie. I aunswere plainly that it is
 not lawfull. For both by the lawe of God and of nature
 thou doste owe to thy brother being in neede the dutie of
 lending. For when he doth in deede stande in neede, and
 thou art able without thy certayne hinderance to helpe
 him, thou doest offende if thou doe not helpe him, and thou
 doest also offende, if thou take any thing more than the
 principall for the bounden dutie of lending. But here are
 foure obseruations to be marked. The first concerneth
 marchants that are not content with their meane. The
 seconde pertayneth vnto societie. The thirde to the inhe-
 ritage of wardes. The fourth is referred to the interest.
 Nowe as concerning the first obseruation, we must vnder-
 stande, that no man ought by the lawe of God and of na-
 ture to lende vnto a verie riche marchant, whose great
 welth and substance is well knowne. For that which is
 lent is due to necessitie, and ought not to serue vn-
 satiable couetousnesse. Wherefore we may deale with this kynde of
 men, according to the rule which we gaue when we in-
 treated of the fift sort of men. The seconde obseruation,
 which we sayd to pertayne vnto societie, is after this sort:
 a marchant boroweth money of thee, and thou doost agree
 with him for parte of the gaine vpon this condition, if he
 shall get any gaine by thy money. Here it is demaunded,
 whether it be lawfull for thee to couenant for parte of the
 gayne. I aunswere, it is lawfull so that thou wilt take

How we may
 lawfully co-
 uenant for
 part of the
 gayne of that
 which wee
 lende.

How we may
 lawfully co-
 uenant for
 part of the
 gayne of that
 which wee
 lende.

How we may
 lawfully co-
 uenant for
 part of the
 gayne of that
 which wee
 lende.

U.ii.

part

A Commentarie vpon the

part of the perill vpon thy selfe. For when this is done it doth not become vsurie. Thou maiest therefore for a yeare require five of the hundred as part of the gaine, so that thou againe wilt suffer five of the hundred to be abated of the principall, if he suffer damage. For he that couenaunteth onely with condition of the gayne and wilbe free from the losse, doth in very deede commit Vsurie. Wherefore he is found guiltie by the lawe of God and of nature.

Howe Gardi-
ans may lende
the mony of
the wardes
committed
vnto them.

But as concerning wardes, the Gardians of the wardes, that the inheritance wherewith they are put in trust be not by little and little wasted, may lend the money of the wardes to them that desire it especially to them that are of the richer sort, and for the benefit of lending and the vse of the money require that which is reasonable, that is, according to the limitation of the magistrate, five of the hundred euery yeare. This kind of dealing is not to be counted vsurie. For neyther Gardians are bound to lende of that which is another mans, neither they which borrow, when as neyther diuine nor naturall bond or dette went before, can iustly refuse to be thankfull for a benefite receiued. The obseruation which pertayneth to the interest, doth also hinder the maner of vsurie. For if by deferring the payment of that which is borrowed the creditour be endamaged, equitie doth require that the dettour make a recompence for the damage. And this they cal the interest which they say doth arise, eyther because of the losse that cometh or because of the gaine that ceaseth. For if the dettour shall not paye that which he borrowed, at the time appoynted for the payment, naturall equitie requireth, that the dettour make recompence for the losse that came to the creditour thereby. The like is to be sayde of the gayne ceasing. But here let the lender beware that he vse not deceytfull ballances. Wherefore charitie is to be added, which is the most iust rule of all contractes and bargaynes. This if it be sincere, will easilye finde equalitie.

Interest wher-
of it is sayd to
come.

Charitie most
necessarie in
all kyndes of
bargaynes.

If

If other sortes of men be offered beside those that are rehearsed, it shall not be harde by the former rules to iudge, what is to be determined concerning them. For there shall easily be founde some likenesse in them with the former kyndes, which may dissolue the question.

Of the fourth.

Followeth that we speake of the fourth member of our partition, which shall contayne certayne admonitions, which may be vnto the godly as certayne consultations not only in this trade concerning vsurie, whereof we haue spoken now sufficiently: but also in euery kinde of contract or bargayne shall kepe vs in our dutie, so that we will giue godly eares vnto them.

The first, Paule. I. Tim. I. sayth: *The ende of the commandement is loue out of a pure heart, and of a good conscience, and of fayth vnfayned.* We sayde before that vsurie is therfore forbidden by the worde of God, that charitie may not be hurt among men. Nowe this rule of Paul willeth, that charitie proceede from a pure fountayne of the heart. Thou must take heede therfore, least that while thou doest outwardly pretende charitie towarde thy neighbour, thy heart be uncleane, with the filthines whereof the dutie is defiled, which thou seemest to perfourme to thy neyghbour. Charitie moreouer requireth a good conscience, to wit, that thou mayst truly witnes before God, that in all thy actions thou seekest the glorie of God, and the profite of thy neighbour without falshood or dissimulation. For whereas falshood and dissimulation is, there charitie is banished, the conscience is spoyled, and fayth perisheth. Whereupon it followeth, that nothing is well done. Let this rule therfore of Paule be alwayes in our sight, whereby we may trie all our doings, as examined with a touchstone.

The seconde, Abstayne, sayth the Apostle, I. Thess. 5. *U.iii.*

The first rule wherby we ought to examine our doings.

What things are required in loue that it may be true and sincere.

The seconde from

A Commentarie vpon the

rule of our
actions.

from all appearance of euill. This rule is exceeding neces-
sarpe. For it admonisheth that we doe flie not onely those
thinges that are euill in very deede, but also that we ab-
staine altogether from the appearance of euill, that is, that
we auoyde whatsoeuer pretendeth any outward shewe of
euill. Let this rule admonish the godly, that they doe ab-
staine not onely from those bargaines which are in deede
euill and vnlawfull: but also from those which haue anye
appearance of euill.

The third ad-
monition
concerning
our doings.

Our mynde
must in no
wise be pro-
phaned with
the filthy Idol
of auarice.

Psal. 119. 36.

The feare of
God and co-
uetousnes can
not agree to-
gether.

Our heart of
it self is prone
vnto coue-
tousnes.

The third, Paule. Hebr. 13. sayth: *Let your conuersation
be without couetousnes.* This precept doth not belong on-
ly to the mind, to wit, that the minde be not prophaned
with the most filthy idol of couetousnes: but also to out-
ward maners. For he will haue vs so to liue, that no man
may lay vpon vs the fault of couetousnes. For when the
conuersation beareth witnes of the couetousnesse of the
heart, godlynes and sayth without all dout are banished.
Wherefore it is not without good aduifement which
Dauid prayeth when he sayth: *Encline my heart vnto thy
testimonies, and not vnto couetousnes.* Here Dauid setteth
obedience toward God and couetousnes one agaynst the
other, signifying that their condition is such, that where
the one is the other cannot be. If therefore the heart bee
infected with the vice of couetousnes, sincere religion to-
ward God can in no wise be there. If a couetous mā doth
sometime pretend some obedience toward God, it is mere
hypocrisie. But contrariwise, if the hearte be feruent in
the loue of God and in his religion, couetousnes hath no
place there. For what agreement hath the idoll of aua-
rice with the temple of God? Furthermore because the
most holy King Dauid desireth of the Lord that his heart
may be inclined to the testimonies of God, and not vnto
couetousnes, he doth manifestly shew, that the heart of it
owne accord is caried to couetousnes, and cannot deliuer
it selfe from couetousnes except God putteth to his hand.

The

Epistle of S. James. 76

The precept therefore of Paule : Let your conuersation be without couetousnes , I would haue the godly to haue alwaye before their eyes, and this prayer of Dauid : Incline my heart to thy testimonies and not to couetousnes, I woulde haue earnestly to be made, which if it were done, there would be lesse struiuing amōg the godly about vsury.

The fourth, Paule will haue Christians so to liue, that our commoditie be not euill spoken of among the heathen. Now it is certaine, y the trade of vsury is infamous amōg the Turks, and all prophane nations. What therfore will they say of Christians, if they shall heare that we doe contend with the most prophane nations, and exceede them in vniust bargaines? These thinges trulye ought worthely to admonish all godly men, that they would rather liue after a meaner sort, then that they woulde giue occasion that the name of God and the Gospell of Christ should be euill spoken of among prophane men. We ought with all examples of godlines & honesty to allure and prouoke them, that they woulde togither with vs worship Christ and be saued, but, O good God, what is done? vnder a Christian name in manye lurketh a Turkish heart.

The fourth admonition concerning our actions specially in bargaining.

The fift, Paule commaundeth vs to auoyde offence, least that the weake being offended at our doings doe stumble. And he will not haue this only that we abstaine from thinges that are euill by them selues, but also from thinges lawfull. It was lawfull for Paule by christian libertie to eate flesh, but what sayth he? before I will offend my brother, I will not eate fleshe while the worlde standeth. So farre doth the dutie of those which are godly in deede extend, not onely to beware that they doe not defile themselves with any spot of sinne, but also that they be not by any meanes a cause to other of falling, whereby they may haue occasion not to iudge so well of vs.

The fift admonition.

1. Cor. 8. 13.

The sixt, let the dignitie of a Christian name come in to our mind. Which name ought trulye not without most iust

The sixt admonition which ought

A.iiii.

A Commentarie vpon the

to moue vs to
deale truly &
so doe well.

just cause to be holy among Christians. It is a shamefull and an vnseemely thing for a man that is borne of a noble and famous house to follow trades that are seruile and contemptible, least that he doth any whit distaine the nobilitie of the house whereof he commeth: much more vnseemely is it that the children of God doe defile themselves with any blemish which afterwarde may spread ouer the whole familie of God.

The seuenth
admonition
which ought
to feare vs
from doing
vniustly.

The seuenth, punishment in the heires is to be feared. For if any man by vniust gaine heapeth vp much goods for his heires, he shall not escape punishment. For God doth eyther in the sight of them take out of the worlde them who they hoped should haue bene their heires, that they may see their owne vanitie and amend, or els he punisheth the heires by forsaking them, suffering them to runne headlong into sundrie vices, that those thinges which were vniustly gotten may most dishonestly be dispersed and perish, vnto the certayne destruction of the heires.

The eyght ad-
monition
which ought
to withdrawe
vs from wrong-
full getting
of riches.

The eyght, let this cogitation come into the mind: that oftentimes the children of poore and honest parents haue come vnto verie great dignities, & that not by the meanes of riches, which they had not, but by the benefite of excellent sciences of honestie, of wisdom, of prudence. I could name euen domesticall examples, but because they are knowne, I let them passe. But contrariwise that many, to whom great riches were left of their forefathers, haue bin eyther brought vnto extreeme pouertie through their owne fault, or els haue bine as painted tables profitable to nothing in the common weale, altogether like to the wooers of Penelope and the swine of Epicure, borne to consume the fruite of the earth. Let this cogitation admonish the godly, that they doe rather leaue vnto their children vertue and a good name, then without vertue many riches, which children are seldome wont to vse but to their

their owne destruction. This saying of Cicero is worthe of remembrance : the best inheritance which is giuen of fathers to their children , and more excellent then euery patrimonie, is the glorie of vertue and noble actes . And agayne : a father can leaue no monument more notable or famous , than a sonne which is the image of his maners, of his vertue, constancie, godlynes and witte . I hope that I haue profitably added these admonitions to the disputation of vsurie, nowe I desire the godly reader that he will weigh them godly, and take them into his counsell in all his busines.

The glory of
vertue an ex-
cellent patri-
monie.

Of the fift.

Theremayneth, which in the last place we propounded, to speake of the office of the ministers of the worde, whose dutie is in the steade of God, as Preachers sent of him, to lift by their voyce as a trumpet, and to accuse the sinnes of men hauing no regard of persons : yet not without spirituall wisdom, which taketh heede that nothing be done vnseemely or amisse . First therefore let the Ministers of the worde earnestly and sharply condemne euery vniust bargayne, yea and that vsurie which is condemned by the worde of God, and let them shewe that no vniust bargayne can stande with true godlynes . Then lette them diligently see, that they iudge not too rashlye or too sharply of bargaynes which the magistrate approueth. Let them put a difference betwene those bargaines which God in his manifest worde hath prohibited, and those which the lawes doe wisely ordeyne for the maintaining of humane societie, and let them not vnder a pretence of vsurie condemne those bargaynes in which in deede there is no vsurie. Moreouer let them reforme as much as they can, manifest errors in bargaynes, by Ecclesiasticall discipline, and that not of any priuate affection, but with sage and wyle counsell, least that correction out of due

Aduertise-
ments to the
ministers of
Gods word,
what they
ought to do
concerning
vsurie and
bargaines.

It is the mini-
sters dutie as
much as they
are able right-
ly to reforme
manifest er-
rors in con-
tracts and
bargains.

¶ i.

season

A Commentarie vpon the

The Church
must be trou-
bled as little
as may be.

A moderation
to be obserued
of godly mi-
nisters in re-
forming ma-
ners.

How the mi-
nisters of God
ought to ad-
monish con-
cerning the
right vse of
riches.

season doth hurt more than profite. Furthermore, although the Preachers of God can not correct all faultes in bargaynes, yet let them not trouble the Church, but commend the thing vnto God, and pray that he will put to his hande. For where there is any perill of schisme, the sentence of excommunication being already pronounced against many, I iudge that they ought altogether to abstayne from excommunication. The tares truly are to be rooted out (as *Augustine* sayth) so that the wheate be not pulled vp together with them. Therefore in amending maners let them followe this moderation: let them correct the horrible sinnes of many, not with might, but with counsell, let them reforme them not with threatening but with admonishing. But contrariwise, let them chastyce the sinnes of a fewe with seueritie, least that they take force and inuade the multitude. Which when it is done, they are more hardly corrected. Finally, let them most diligently admonishe the rich men that they suffer not them selues to be deceyued by their riches, and that they take heede least that they being beguyled by the deceyfull reasons of the foolish flethe, doe lose the sayth, and fall into the snares of Satan. Let them admonishe also that the Lorde did not say in bayne: that it is an harde thing for a rich man to enter into the kingdome of heauen. Let them nowe and then commend the true vse of riches vnto them: Let them shewe that Christ woulde therefore haue in his Church certayne needie and naked members of his bodie, that he might trie the rich men whether they did by a true sayth loue him in his members or no. These aduertisements we haue giuen to the Ministers of the Gospell which are of the simpler sorte, the other, especially they that are more exercised in the ministerie, doe easily vnderstande by themselves howe the worde of God is to be decided and applied.

of

Of Lending.

Lending doth followe, which doth not alienate a thing into the proper possession of the recepuer, as it is done in the former bargaynes, but doth only alienate the vse of the thing, and that for a time, that the very same thing in due time may be restored agayne. This contract hath the name of the vse of it, bicause the things that we borowe, doe bring vnto vs some commoditie and profite. Let this kinde of contract be without deceit both in the lender and also in the borrower, and let it be subiect to the lawe of charitie.

Lending what it is.

Of hyring and letting out.

Let the bargaynes of hyring and letting out be subiect to the custome and condition of the time and place, yet so, that there be no departing from the lawe of charitie. He therefore which letteth out the vse of his thing or his labour, according to the custome of the Realme, and other circumstances, maye require a pryce or rewarde of him that hireth it. He which will not paye it, is vniust. Herevnto me thinketh pertayneth the bargayne which the Lawyers call *emphuteusis*, that is, planting or graffing, therefore so called, bicause they that in times past did hire barren fields, did make them better by planting and graffing, that is, by good ordering and blage, and did pay to the owners a certayne yerely rent for the vse of the fields, the right neuertheles of the possession remayning in the letter of them out. This particular was afterwarde translated to a generall, that is, to the letting out of all fieldes and houses. This contract therefore concerning tilling and planting, consisteth in the dealing with the ground and lande only, wherein fruite cometh to him that hyreth, by tilling and due ordering: but the letter of it out doth remayne the true owner of the lande, and therefore accor-

What is to be obserued in hyring and letting out.

¶ ii.

ding

87 *A Commentarie vpon the*

ding to the lawes and customes of countries, he doth iustly receyue part of the fruite by the bargayne.

Of the contract of societie.

The contract
of societie
wherein it
consisteth.

In that which they call the contract of societie, that is, whereas one bestoweth money only, and another onely labour, or one bestoweth money and labour, another onely money or labour, or both bestow money and labour, but not equally: we must follow the foundation without deceipt: doe not that to an other which thou wilt not haue done to thy selfe. He which contrarie to this foundation shall deceiue his felow is vniust, and hath broken the lawes of brotherly societie. These things I thought good to adde concerning contracts and bargaines that I might herein haue consideration of the consciences of the godly. A full and perfect doctrine of bargaines may be taken out of the writings of the lawyers, who of purpose as cunning and skilfull in these matters, doe write of them most copiously, neither is there any cause, that any man should thinke that the ordinances or decrees of wise gouernoures concerning bargaines or other offices profitable in the life of man, are against the Gospell. For, as before we haue witnessed, the Gospell doth not abolish ciuill ordinances. For the Lorde sayth: *My kingdome is not of this worlde.* The Gospell therfore leaueth to euery nation the lawes therof, which varying not from the tennē commaundements do tend to the mayntayning of common weales and families. Wherefore the godly may most safely follow this rule: All bargaynes approued of the lawfull magistrate, which hath the chiefe gouernment, are lawfull vnto Christians, so as they doe not playnely disagree with the lawe of nature and the ten commaundements. And therefore the godly may vse them freely with a good conscience without offending God, no otherwise then these elementes, which are common both to the godly and vngodly.

Ioh. 18. 36.

A rule which
the godly may
safely follow
in all kindes
of bargains.

A

Epistle of S. James.

79

*A Question concerning the goods of
the Church.*

*Whether it be lawfull for heires to require againe the
goods, which their forefathers haue bestowed vpon the
Church for the celebrating of Masses: the Masses nowe
ceasing, ye being quite abolished.*

The Answer.

A Difference must be put betweene the next ende of
the giuing and the last ende. The next ende of the
giuing was the celebrating of the Masse, which, seeing
it is vngodlye, they doe well, which abolishe the cu-
stome thereof. The last ende was the mayntaining of
the worshippe and seruice of God. To this ende, bicause
it is good and holpe, ought all the goodes to be refer-
red, which in time past were giuen to the celebrating of
Masse.

Two endes to
be considered
in the giuing
of goods to
the celebra-
ting of mas-
ses. &c.

An obiection.

*They obiect, that in many of their deedes of gift this
clause is expressed: If such custome of celebrating Masse
or of singing shall cease, let the heires haue power to re-
ceyue againe those goods which their forefathers haue gi-
uen to the celebrating of Masses. &c.*

The Answer.

They that bestowed those goods vpon the Church, did
erre in the particular, and not in the general. The par-
ticular is the celebration of the Masse. The generall is
the worship and seruice of God. The heires therefore be-
ing better instructed, ought to correct the faultes of their
forefathers, and conuert that to the true worship of God,
which was appoynted for the prophaning of the supper of
the Lorde. Vea I thinke that this is rather the office of
the godly magistrate, that these goodes be not suffered to
serue the auarice of priuate men. *Flora an harlot of Rome*
bestowed the substance that she had, which was verie
great, to the maintayning of a yearely pageant or play at
Rome.

*Flora an har-
lot of Rome
how she be-
queathed her
goods and to
what end
they were af-
terward em-
ployed.*

¶.iii.

Rome.

A Commentarie vpon the

Rome. When the most graue censor *Caro* thought good that this play should be abolished for the dishonestie thereof, and for the filthie gestures and behauiour of harlots, the heires of *Flora*, the playes of *Flora* being abolished, do require againe the goods that *Flora* had giuen. But the Senate of Rome did most wisely iudge, that these goods ought not to returne to the heires, but that the purpose of *Flora* which gaue them was to be considered, whose last will was, that the goods which she had giuen should serue the common weale of Rome. For *Flora* although shee erred in the particular, yet did she not erre in the generall. Wherefore that the generall might be kept, the Senate of Rome did most rightly iudge that those goods which *Flora* had giuen should not be restored to the heires which required them, because the playes of *Flora* were abolished. After the same maner those goods that are giuen to the maintayning of masses, ought not to be restored to the heires, the masses ceasing, but are to be conuerted to the generall end, that they may serue the Church of God, that is, that they may be giuen to them that teach, to them that learne, to them that haue deserved, to them that are keepers and defenders of the Church. They ought not to serue the pleasures of men, but the necessities of y^e Church. So also dooth *Bartolus* a most excellent lawyer iudge, which toucheth this very case concerning masses, in his commentaries vpon the law. Of that which is giuen to the citie. The wordes of *Bartolus* are these: If he that maketh his last will and testament hath left an hundred poundes for singing masses, which masses cannot be song because of the commaundement to the contrarpe, that which was left ought to be conuerted to an other vse. The same *Bartolus* doth a little before set downe the generall sentence: If, sayth he, he that maketh his last will, addeth a maner or condition which is vnpossible (to wit by reason of the prohibition) for some lawfull and honest ende, then

Howe such goods ought to be bestowed which in times past haue bene giuen to the maintayning of superstitious. The iudgement of *Bartolus* a singular lawyer.

Epistle of S. James. 80

then if it can not be fulfilled after that sort, which he hath sayd, it is converted to some other lawfull vse.

The grievousnes of the sinne of them which couetously and greedily get into their handes the goods of the Church.

They which couetously and greedily get into theyr handes the goods of the Church, doe violate both tables. For they are both vngodly against God, and also cruell toward the Church and the members thereof. Inasmuch as they doe both with sacriledge vsurpe vnto themselves those things that are giuen to the worship of God, & also doe spoyle the needie members of the Church of their living. Cicero affirmeth that he doth more grievously offend, which wrongfully takech any thing out of the common treasure, then he which stealeth the treasure of a priuate man. Therefore it is certayne that they doe farre more grievously sinne which wrongfully possesse the goods of the Church. The Lord condemneth them, which doe not bestow somewhat vpon the poore of that substance which they haue: how shall we thinke that they shall escape the iudgement of God, which greedily get vnto themselves those thinges that belong to others? He is reprobued by the voyce of God, which doth not suffer iniurie with a patient minde: how may it be that he shoulde scape unpunished which doeth iniurie to the members of Christ? God is not deceiued with subtiltie, he doth not receiue vniust excuses. Wherefoeuer these couetous and greedy getters into their hands of the goods of the church doe turne them selues they cannot auoyde but that they are gilty of the *seuenth precept. For when the Lord saith: Thou shalt not steale, he forbiddeth vs by any pretence of right to chalenge to our selues vniustly any thing which belongeth to an other. But although many at this day wrongfully possessing the goods of the Church, doe

They which wrongfully enioy the goods of the church are gilty of both tables.

* Note that he followeth not the same diuision of the commandments which we commonly do

¶.iiii.

seeme

A Commentarie vpon the

The testimo-
nie of a mans
owne consci-
ence against
himselfe a
thing most
griuous.

Sacrilege shall
not escape vn-
punished with-
out earnest
and heartie
repentance.

God will in
his time iustly
punish the
scorners and
despisers of
his worde.

seeme pleasantly to enioy them, yet they cary about with them their conscience as a witnes, which although it be-
ing as it were seared with an hote iron, doth for a time
rest securely: neuertheles at length, and that at the point
of death, being as it were raised out of a dead sleepe, it
shall be in steede of a thousand witnesses, and shall more
griuously afflict the heart, then any renting or tearing of
the body can here and torment the body. Then they shall
truly perceiue, that it was not for nothing which in time
past was sayde of Esay. chap. 33. *Wo to thee that spoylest,
and wast not spoyled: and doest wickedly and they did not
wickedly against thee: when thou shalt cease to spoyle, thou
shalt be spoyled: when thou shalt make an end of doing wic-
kedly, they shall doe wickedly against thee.* They shal
at length perceiue that these wordes of the Prophet doe
not vanish away into the aer. These men thinke that there
is no daunger, because they doe not feele the present hand
of God, whom notwithstanding the historie of the Iewish
people doth sufficiently teach, that the punishment of the
that commit sacrilege is not taken away although it be de-
ferred for a time for their sakes, whom the Lord by his
goodnes dooth call vnto repentance. The Iewish people
contemned the voice of the Prophets, but at the last, the
measure of their sinnes being filled vp, they came to bitter
destruction. At this day the voyce of the Lord doth sounde
in our eares, and we sleepe securely on eyther side with-
out repentance, but our sinnes being come to the full, the
Lord will poure out his wrath also vpon vs, and so that
will come to passe which Ieremie hath foretold: *As a
theefe that is taken with the deede commeth to shame: e-
uen so shalt thou come to confusion.* By which word the
spirite of God doth signifie, that it will come to passe, that
they at length shal suffer due punishment, which mocking
and scorning at the word of God, do thinke that all things
are lawfull vnto them which the lust and sensualitie of the
minde

Epistle of S. James.

8r

minde doth perswade.

*A Question of the right vse of the goods
of the Church*

BEcause the goodes of the Church haue bin a long time in great abuse, it is with good cause enquired, what is the true and lawfull vse of the goods of the Church, and vpon whom these goods ought to be bestowed. For one doth not therefore by good right possesse the goods of the Church eyther because he weareth a hooode, or because his voice soundeth in the church, ye or because he vnderstandeth the Latine tongue, in which errour many haue hit thereto bin: But here the holy fathers are to be heard, which can iudge with a sincere iudgement. *Gratian* rehearsing the sentence of *Augustine*, doth witnes that the stipends of the Church, that is, the yearely reuenews and giftes, ought to be distributed into four partes. Whereof the first ought to be giuen to the Bysshop and his familie, for maintayning his office and hospitalitie, not to maintaine riot, pride, chaines of gold, ringes of gold, not to feede palfreys, not to keepe a courtly rout: but to necessarie and honest sustentation, least that he being deceiued and caried away with the riches of this worlde, doe forget his dutie, as it is sufficiently knowne to haue come to passe in this realme in time past. The second part ought to be giuen to the clergie, whereof I make three orders or sorts. In the first are they which teach and learne in the church, to whom stipendes and exhibition is due, least that being compelled with pouertie they forsake their office. In the second are they which in time past haue serued the Church, but now eyther griued with sicknes or wasted with old age, not able to execute their office. To these liberall sustentation of the goods of the Church is due. In the third order or sort are they, which doe deserue it by their labour and traual in the studies which are profitable to the Church, these ought as souldiers to be main-

P.i.

tayned

The sentence of *Augustine* concerning the right distribution of the goodes of the Church.

The first part of the Church goodes.

The seconde part of the goods of the Church, howe it ought to be bestowed.

A Commentarie vpon the

The right be-
stowing of
the third part
of the goodes
of the Church.

The fourth
part of the
goodes of the
Church howe
to be em-
ployed.

Abuses of the
goods of the
Church.

Ciuit gouern-
ment not
meete for the
ministerie.

tained to the vse of the Church. The thirde part ought to be bestowed vpon the poore, which are such in dede, whose lyfe past hath ben honest. For they that haue spent their goodes in hunting and companying with harlots, are unworthie to be nourished or maintayned with the goods of the Church. Let these begge for their liuing. The fourth part ought to be reserued for the building and repaying of temples and houses. This sentence of *Augustine* is a godly and a true partition of the goodes of the Church. That holy man will not haue dogges and harlots to be maintayned with the goodes of the Church, he will not haue ydle bellies and sluggishe drones to become fatte by the goodes of the Church. He will not haue swarmes of Monks, most vnprofitable lumps of earth, to liue delicately of the goodes of the Church, he will not haue smoke and bayne soundes of wordes to be solde for the treasure of the Church, but he requireth a iust distribution according to the proportion of Geometrie, which hath regarde both of the office and also of the labour in assigning stipendes. And although I allowe this sentence of *Augustine*, concerning the partition of the goods of the Church, neuertheles, this with good reason I adde: First, because ciuill gouernement is not meete for Bishops, it is lawfull for godly Kings and Princes to transerre gouernement, rule, ciuill iurisdiction, furniture and riches of Bishoppes vnto themselves, so that they conuert them to the preserving of the Church of God, that is, it is lawfull for godly Kings and Princes to fence and fortifie themselves with these goodes, that they may haue wherewith they may defende the Church agaynst enemies, and whereby they may be bountifull toward the godly exiles and others that haue well deserued of the Church and of the common weale. But that we doe rightly say that ciuill gouernment is not meete for Bishops, those sayings doe sufficiently shewe, which put a difference betwene the ministerie of the

Epistle of S. James. 82

the Gospell and ciuill gouernement. As my father sent me (sayth the Lorde) so sende I you. My kingdome is not of this worlde. The kings of the Gentiles reigne ouer them, but ye shall not be so. The weapons of our warfare are not carnall. But the Papistes object that certayne Pro- uinces were giuen to the Romane Bishoppe of Con- stantine. If we graunt this to be true, though it be most false, yet though that power was giuen to Syluester, it was not lawfull for him to receyue it in that function in which he was, and to deliuer it to his successours. Bicause euery one ought to doe the duties of his vo- cation, according to the saying: Studie to be quiet, and to meddle with your owne businesse. The Bishop ought to teach, the King to gouerne and ouersee armies, stipends, warres, the peace of the bodie. These things therefore are not to be committed to a pastour, but let euery one in his calling be mindefull of his rule: Doe your owne bu- sinesse. Agayne, let euery one walke as God hath called him. Agayne, doe those things deuoutly which God hath commaunded thee. The saying therefore, but it shall not be so with you, maye not onely be vnderstande thus, that Christ doth not giue ciuill power with the ministerie of the Gospell, but also that it be not taken or exercised of him that is in h ministerie. When as the Papists object the aunswere of the Lorde to the saying: Beholde here are two swordes, they doe sufficiently declare that they deale Sophistically and subtilly. For when he aunswereth that it is ynough, he signifieth the complaynt concerning the two sortes of enemies. It is ynough that the swordes both of the high Priests and also of Pilate are drawne against you. Hereof without all doubt is concluded that ciuill go- uernement is not meete for Bishoppes and Pastours. Wherefore Christierne the thirde, king of Denmarke, did well and godly, when he transferred the dominion and rule of Bishops vnto himselfe, to preserue and maintaine

Ioh. 20. 21. & 18. 36.

Luke. 22. 25.

2. Cor. 10. 4.

1. Thess. 4. 11.

Euery one must meddle with his owne busines.

P. ii.

the

A Commentarie vpon the

the studies necessarie to the Church, and to repress the enemies of the Gospell. Moreover, wheresoeuer the reuenues of the Church are as yet more plentifull, as where it is well looked vnto them, of whome it is sayde, a godly King or Prince ought as a stewarde and nourisher of the Church, to haue regarde of the goods that remayne, and especially to take heede that the goodes of the Church be not possessed of ydle bellies, which neyther haue serued the Church at any time, neyther doe serue it, neyther are able to serue eyther it or the cōmon weale. For as the Lorde aboue is the defender of other publike goods: so is he also the defender of the goods of the Church. And as it belongeth to the king, if a citie doe bestowe the goodes of the treasure yll and amisse, to prouide and see that they be more diligently and profitably bestowed: so also doth it belong to Kings and Princes to haue a care of the goods of the Church, that those things which haue hitherto serued superstition, may now be applyed to their true vles. But in the meane season let euery one take hede, least that vnder a pretence of godlynes he conuert the goodes of the Church to riot and prophane vles.

7 Be pacient therefore, brethren, vnto the comming of the Lorde.

An exhortation to the pore to be pacient.

Vpon the rebuking of rich men he bringeth in an exhortation to godly poore men, that when they see what kynde of ende there shall be of them, which abuse their riches in this lyfe, they may rather patiently beare the present miseries, then that they will desire the riches of rich men with perill of their saluation. And this is the proposition of the exhortation.

Beholde the husbandman vwaiteth for the precious fruite of the earth, and hath long patience for it, vntill he receyue the earely and the latter rayne.

8 Be ye also pacient therefore, and settle your hearts: for the comming of the Lorde draweth neare.

The

The first reason of the proposition is taken of the example of husbandmen. Euen as husbandmen labouring in tilling and sowing their fieldes, doe patiently looke for frute: so the godly ought by patience to looke for the ende of faith, which is the saluation of their soules. That is called former rayne, which falleth in the Spring time, the seede being nowe newly cast into the earth. That is called latter rayne, which falleth in the Autumne, when the eares of corne are full, whereby the graines do swell and are made bigger. The reason of the calling thereof is, bicause the whole time that the seede is in the ground, is compared to one day, & beginning whereof is the Spring time and the ende the Autumne.

The first reason of the exhortation to patience.

The ende of our sayth.

9 Grudge not one against an other, brethren, least ye be condemned: beholde, the Iudge standeth before the doore.

The seconde reason taken from the punishment of impatience. By the name of grudging is signified an inwarde complaynt, which proceedeth from impatience. To stand before the doore, is to be neare at hande.

The seconde reason of the exhortation to patience.

10 Take, my brethren, the Prophets for an ensample of suffering aduersitie, and of long patience, vvhich haue spoken in the name of the Lorde.

The thirde reason of the example of the Prophetes, who though they did supplie the place of the Lorde in preaching the worde, yet they were not free from affliction, wherein they declared exceeding great patience. See the 11. Chap. of the Epistle to the Hebrewes.

The third reason of the exhortation to patience.

11 Behold vve count them blessed vvhich endure.

The fourth reason taken from thinges that are adiacent or adioyned one to an other. They are sayde to be blessed which suffer, *Matth. 5.* Therfore it behoueth vs patiently to suffer present afflictions. But they are blessed two manner of wayes, by feeling and by the euent or ende. By feeling, because they doe in deede vnder the Crosse feeble the

The fourth reason of the exhortation to patience.

P.iii.

presence

A Commentarie vpon the

presence of God comfortiing them. By euent or ende, because they shal in deede be deliuered, according to the promise of Christ, *Matth. 5.*

Ye haue heard of the paciēce of Iob, and haue knownen vwhat ende the Lord made.

The fift reason of the exhortation to pacience.

The fift reason taken of the ende of present remedies, which he sheweth by propounding the famous example of holy Iob. Iob was afflicted aboue measure, but the ende which the Lord gaue was most ioyfull. For the time of affliction being ouercome, he receyued cōfort, and was gloriously deliuered from all his afflictions. And so in our present troubles and miseries, our eyes are to be fastened not so much vpon these miseries, as vpon the ioyfull ende of them.

For the Lorde is very pitifull and mercifull.

Howe God is mercifull and how he sheweth mercie.

The confirmation of the fift reason taken from the affection of God toward them, which doe beare afflictions patiently in sayth. Because oftentimes mention is made in the Scripture of the mercy of God and that for most iust cause, and God is saide to be mercifull, and to shew mercy and compassion. (He is mercifull inasmuch as he is in deede moued with our miseries, and doth as it were suffer with vs. He sheweth mercy and compassion because he reacheth his hand to vs being in miserie, and deliuereth vs out of miserie) I will briefly reherse what thinges ought to come into our mind, as often as mention is made of the mercy of God toward vs. First y^e object of mercy is to be thought vpon, which is y^e miserie of mākind wherby y^e whole race of mankind is in it selfe most miserably lost, subiect to the tyrāny of y^e deuil, in danger of al calamities, spirituall & corporall. Secondly, the cause of this miserie is to be considered, which is sin, the most horrible and most filthie thing of all things, y^e most iust punishment whereof is euerlasting torment of soules & bodie. Thirdly, the infinite loue of God toward mākind is to be reuolued in the minde,

Most worthy cogitations which ought to come into our myndes as often as we heare the mercie of God toward vs mentoned.

The seconde cogitation.
The thirde cogitation.

minde, that God hath not betterly cast away mankind for so great filthines and vncleannes. Fourthly let the sacrifice of the sonne of God be thought vpon, whereby he helpeth our miserie, and maketh a full satisfaction for sinne. By thinking vpon this sacrifice the holy fathers haue comforted themselues in their sacrifices. To this sacrifice Dauid hath regard, as often as in the Psalmes he earnestly desireth the mercye of God, which psalme 51. doth sufficiently shew, where he maketh his prayer in these wordes: *Haue mercy on me, O Lorde, according to thy loving kindenes, according vnto the multitude of thy mercies wipe away my wickednes.* Whē he saith, *wipe away*, he hath respect vnto the bloud of the mediatur as he doth more plainly shewe in the seuenth verse, where he maketh mention of the satisfaction for sinne, for so he saith: *Purge thou me with hyssop and I shall be cleane* Fifthly, repentance or conuersion is here required, without which we are not made partakers of this vspeakable price, of the sacrifice of the sonne of God. Hereunto pertain many sayinges of the Prophets. 2. Paral. 30. *The Lord your God is gracious and mercifull, and will not turne away his face from you, if ye conuert vnto him.* Iere. 3. *Turne againe ye children, and so shall I heare your backturninges.* Againē chap. 18. *Let euery man turne from his euil way, and take vpon him the thing that is good and right, and your iniquitie shal not turne to your destruction: To this conuersion the Gospell calleth vs: Repent, for the kingdom of God is at hand.* And Christ him selfe saith: *I came no to call the iust but sinners to repentance.* Sixtly, a continuall thankfulness in our whole life with extolling and setting forth the glorie of God is required, and a certayne holy carefullnes is to be had in gouerning our maners that we may seeme in heart, mouth, tongue, and in our whole conuersation to extoll the mercye of God. Seuenthly, because our weakenes is great, which is increased by thinking sometime vpon

The fourth.

The fifth cogitation concerning the mercy of God

The sixth cogitation or farther meditation.

The seuenth cogitation.

P. iiii.

our

A Commentarie vpon the

our particularitie, sometime vpon our vnworthines, we must thinke that the mercy of God is not contayned within narrow bounds, neither that the greatnes of our sinnes doe exceede it, but that it is extended to all the endes of the world, and doth by infinite meanes abound aboue sinne.

The Lord is
most abun-
dant and rich
in mercie.

Luke. 1. 50.

2. Pet. 3. 9.

The blessed Virgin sayth: The mercy of God is from generation to generation on them that feare him. And Peter sayth: The Lord is patient towards vs, and would haue no man to perish, but would all men to come to repentance. Of this most rich mercy of God S. Cyrill writeth in this manner. The mount of Oliues doth signifie the heighth and abundance of the diuine mercy plentifully shewed vnto vs by the comming of the sonne of God in the flesh. The mercy of God is often times in the Scriptures expessed by the name of oyle, because the nature of oyle doth agree with the maner and condition thereof. For oyle is caried aboue other licours and swimmeth aboue them, so the mercy of God is aboue all his workes, and doth more appeare vnto men then the rest. For mercy exceedeth iudgement: and, his mercy is ouer all his workes. Moreover, oyle doth mitigate the griefes of woundes, and doth heale swellings and sores: but the mercy of God doth heale the sores of our soules, and driueth away all faintnes of sinne,

Why the
mercy of God
is in the scrip-
ture compa-
red to oyle.

Psal. 103. 3. 4.

as the Prophet sayth: Who forgiveth all thy wickednes and healeth all thine infirmities, who satisfieth thy mouth with good things, and crowneth thee with mercy and louing kindnes. Finally they that should come into the place of wrestling or struing, did come forth into the midst being annoynted with oyle, whereby their bodies might be more pliable and fitte for that kinde of exercise: so the Lord sheweth vnto them his mercy which are about to strue against the appie powers, with it he preuenteth vs and giueth vs strength, whereby we being fortified in so harde a fight with his helpe, maye at the last goe awaye conquerers. In thee saith the Prophet, I shall be deliue-

Psal. 18. 28.

re. l

Epistle of S. James. 85

red from tentation, and with the helpe of my God I shall leape ouer the wall, And agayne: God is my light and sal-
uation, whom then shall I feare? God is the strength of my life, of whom then shall I be afrayde? Though an hoste of men were layde in campe agaynst me, yet shall not myne heart be afrayde: and though there rose vp warre agaynst me, yet I will put my trust in him. Lastly in another place: My strength will I ascribe vnto thee: for thou art the God of my refuge. My mercifull God will preuent me.

Psalm 27. 1. 3.

Psalm 59. 9. 10.

Augustine in a certayne sermon sayth: His mercye is most abundant, and his beneuolence large, which hath redeemed vs with the bloud of his sonne, when because of our sinnes we were nothing. For he did some great thing, when he created man to his owne image and similitude. But because we woulde be made nothing by sinning, and tooke the issue of mortallitie of our parents, & were made a masse of sinne (a masse of wrath) neuertheless it pleased him by his mercie to redeeme vs with so great a price, he gaue for vs the bloude of his only sonne innocently borne, innocently liuing, innocently dying, who hath redeemed vs with so great a price. He wil not haue them perish whō he hath bought, he hath not bought them whō he wil destroy, but he hath bought thē whō he will quicken & make alieue.

A description of the great mercy of God toward man.

12 But before al things, my brethre, svveare not, neyther by heauen, nor by earth, nor by any other oth: but let you yea be yea, and your nay, nay, least ye fall into condemnation.

As he condemneth a rashe custome of swearing, setting down the punishment therof: so he prescribeth a maner of affirming and denyng, when he sayth: Let your yea be yea, and your nay, nay, that is, that which is to be affirmed simply and without an oth, affirme, and that which is simply to be denied, denie.

3.4. Of

A Commentarie vpon the

Of an Othe.

What points
he meaneth
to entreat of
concerning
an oth.

Because the Anabaptistes abuse this saying to abolithe every othe, I iudge it expedient to declare this place more at large, that it may be euident howe farre it is lawfull to sweare and howe farre not, and that I may keepe a certayne maner in the handling hereof, I will speake of these things in order. First I will generally shewe that it is lawfull sometime to sweare. Then I will inquire out those things, which are required to a lawfull oth, that it may appeare which is lawfull, and which is unlawfull. Moreover, whom we must beleue when they haue sworn, for we must not beleue euery one that hath sworne. In the last place I will refell the argumentes of the Anabaptists.

Of the first.

Six firme reasons that it is lawfull sometime to take an oth.

* They diuide not the commandements after the same maner that we do, which neuertheles is a thing indifferent.

What othes are sometime lawfull, it is taught by the sixe arguments following. The first, the seconde precept of the ten commaundements, doth manifestly require the religion or right vsing of an othe. For when it forbiddeth the abuse of the name of God, it requireth the lawfull vse thereof, to wit. invocation of God, part whereof is a religious othe. The second, the declaration of the *second precept Deut. 6. doth proue the same, for there Moses sayth; *Thou shalt sweare by his name*, this saying doth both witnes that an othe is lawfull, and also doth shewe a maner of swearing. For God will not haue, that the Israelites sweare by the names of Devils, after the maner of the Gentiles, but by his name. The thirde, Exod. 22. The commaundement of the Lorde is this, when there is controuersie concerning a thing committed to another to keepe, if the thing be taken awaye, God hath commaunded, that he to whom it was committed to keepe, do purge himselfe with an oth. The fourth, the many examples of saints

Saints and holy men, as of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and of many others, who in no case would haue eyther sworn themselves or required othes of other, except they had thought that it had bene lawfull to sweare. But the othes of them doe make a rule of a lawfull othe, as I will afterwarde declare. The first, the example of Christ and of the Apostles in the newe testament. Howe often doth Christ vse this maner of swearing: Verily, verily, &c. Howe often doth Paule sweare, and also the other Apostles. These things the Apostles had in no wise done, and much lesse Christ, if euery othe had bene unlawfull. The sixt, the end of an oth, Heb. 6. And an oth. sayth he, for confirmation is among men an ende of all strife. We haue firme reasons, by which it is plainly shewed that euery othe is not unlawfull, as the Anabaptistes crie out: Nowe let vs go to that which we propounded in the seconde place.

Of the seconde.

In an othe which is an affirming or denying of some thing, with a calling to witnes of the name of God, or of some other thing, which ought to be vnto vs sacred and vniuolate, foure things are required, which are diligently to be considered in euery othe: as the partes of the othe, the causes, the affection of him that sweareth, and the ende of swearing. The partes are two, the one is the calling of God to witnes about the thing which we as firme or denie. For he that sweareth, when he hath no other witness, appealeth to God, from whome nothing is hidde, and desireth his testimonie, and confirmeth by an othe that that which he sayth proceedeth from God as a witnes. Hereupon it followeth, that we must not flie to the diuine testimonie, but when as both other witnesses can not be had, and the matter is so knowne to him that sweareth, that he knoweth that he doth not rashly appeale to so great a witnes. The other is the condition of the ben-
geance

What an oth is.

Foure things to be considered in an oth.

The first parte of an oth.

The second part of an oth.

3.ii.

A Commentarie vpon the

reance of God against him which sweareth and deceyueth in swearing. For if he doth not escape punishment, which doth falsly alledge the testimonie of an earthly king, what shall be done to him which maketh God a lyer? This condition ought to call backe all men not onely from perjurie, but also from lightnes of swearing. The causes of swearing are two, the former is the ignorance of the thing which is in hande, the latter the weyghtines thereof. For in trifling matters, and of none or small importance, we must not flie to an othe. For the name of God ought to be more sacred and holy vnto vs, than that we should flie vnto it by swearing, except exceeding great necessitie doth vrgen vs. The affection of him that sweareth ought to be double, for he ought to be moued thereunto both wth hatred of a lie, and with the loue of the truth. Wherefoeuer this affection is not, the name of God is taken in vayne. The ende of swearing is also double, one, that the truth may be known, another, that God maye be honoured, by whome it is swozne. Of these foure rightly conferred together, it shall easily appeare, when it is lawfull to sweare, and when not. Certayne doe allowe this distinction, that a publike othe only, that is, required of the lawfull magistrate, is lawfull, but not a priuate othe, that is, which one maketh of his owne accorde, eyther in his owne or in another mans cause. But because many examples do proue euen priuate othes, I do not receyue this distinction. Nowe I define that to be a lawfull othe which is taken in the feare of God to confirme the truth of that thing, the ignorance whereof woulde eyther hinder the glorie of God, or hurt the safegarde or good name of our neyghbours.

Two principall causes of an oth.

The affections which ought to be in him that sweareth.

Two endes of swearing.

The definition of a lawfull othe.

Of the third.

The othes of wicked men

Now is to be declared whom we must beleue, when they haue swozne. For we must not beleue euery one, no though he haue swozne. The Poet Menander saith:
write

write the oth of wicked men in the water. He signifieth therefore by this signe, that it is vayne that wicked men sweare. For he which doth playnly transgresse the other commaundements of God, as with idolatrie, vniustice, tyrannie, drunkennes, adulterie, haunting the companye of harlots, and with such like: he will easily also contemne God with swearing. Therefore let neyther the godly magistrate nor any other easily approue such men hauing sworne. Paule swearing in these wordes: *God is my witness.* Forthwith addeth, *Whom I serue in my spirite,* signifying that we must beleue them that feare God if they shall sweare concerning any thing. For they that being boyde of fayth can not worship God, howe are they to be thought to worship him with the religion or right vsing of an oth? Howe wilt thou giue part to him, from whom thou hast taken the whole?

are vayne and not to be beleued.

Rom. 1.9.

VWhom we must beleue when they sweare.

Of the fourth.

Now let vs see what foundations the Anabaptists rest vpon. First they bring the saying of the Lorde *Matth. 5. I say vnto you, sweare not at all.* Secondly they vige the wordes of James: *Sweare not my brethren, neither by heauen, nor by earth, nor by any other oth. Let, saith the Lord, your communication be yea, yea: Nay, nay. For whatsoever is more then these, commeth of euil.* These foundations the Anabaptists leane vnto, to whom I would peeld, if that the former reasons did not better instruct me. But that it may be vnderstand what the prohibition of the Lorde meaneth, which seemeth to be vniuersall, we must mark the purpose of Christ in this whole sermon of workes. It is not the purpose of the Lorde to correct the lawe of his father, but to disclose and reprove the errours of the interpreters of the lawe. The lawe of the father is: thou shalt sweare by my name. This lawe the Lord doth not abolish, but doth rather maintaine it, whiles that he reprehendeth the corrupting thereof. The

The foundations which the Anabaptists leane vnto in taking away al othes and swearing.

A declaration of the saying of Christ, wherein the Anabaptistes affirme that he doth forbid all kynde of swearing.

3.iii.

Phari-

A Commentarie vpon the

How the Pharisees corrupted the lawe of God concerning swearing.

How Iames is to be vnderstand when he forbiddeth swearing.

The saying of Osee expounded wherein he seemeth to forbid swearing.

Pharisees of this lawe concluded after this sort: God hath commaunded that we sweare by his name, therefore we may sweare for euery cause and after euery sort. This erroneous consequent the Lord reprehendeth when he saith: *Thou shalt not forswear thy selfe, but shalt performe thine othes to the Lord. But I say vnto you, sweare not at all, neyther by heauen. &c.* The generall word at all ought to be referred to the maner of swearing then receiued, to wit, to sweare for euery cause and after euery sorte according to the maner of prophane men. Here therefore Christe prohibiteth his Disciples and them that trulye feare the Lorde to sweare rashly for euery cause and after euery sort. For he will haue the name of God to be reuerensed and worshipped more religiously then that it be taken in vayne. Iames likewise doth not abolish the commaundement of God concerning the religion or right vsing of an oth, but he doth onely correct the custome of swearing rashly and after euery sort. For the lawfull maner of swearing is reckened among the promises of the Gospell: *Iere. 4. Thou shalt sweare, The Lord liueth, in truth, in equitie, and righteousness.* This is not a saying of commaunding but of promising, that the true Israell may become a true worshipper of God, and that the Gentiles may embrace the true religion of God. A prooffe whereof shall be, that they shall sweare after this maner: the Lord liueth, and not after this: *Baal, Saturne or Iupiter liueth.* But that which is sayde *Osee. 4.* *Neyther shall ye sweare the Lorde liueth:* is a voyce of threatning. For he threatneth the vnthankfull Iewes, that their countrie shall be made desolate for their stubboynnes and disobedience against God, that in the place of the true worship of God shall be set the worship of Idoles, whereupon it shall come to passe, that they shall not sweare any more: the Lorde liueth, but Baal liueth, &c. The Anabaptists vye the forme prescribed of the Lorde: *Let your communication be*

yea,

yea, yea: nay, nay. What meaneth the Lorde by these wordes? that in steede of a rash oth they be constant & aduised talke. The Lord therefore requireth constancie in our sayings, that our yea be yea, and our nay be nay. He doth not forbid but that it is lawfull for vs to sweare to a religious oth, when the weightines of the cause doth so require: but they do more forcibly vrgē that which followeth. For, sayth Christ, *Whatsoeuer is added more then these commeth of euil*, That is, that which is rashly addeed more then a simple affirming or denying, no weightie cause requiring, it commeth of euill, that is, of an euill affection of the minde, or of an euill conscience, or of the deuill himselfe. He sayth not that a lawfull oth commeth of euil, but a rash oth onely which is taken with a certayne lightnes, of an euil custome, and for euery light cause. Againe, it may sometime fall out that an oth commeth not of the euil of him that sweareth but of him that doth not beleue a bare and simple affirmation, which when it commeth to passe a religious oth shall not therefore be euell. For euery thing is not euill which commeth of euil, in asmuch as it falleth out often times, that those thinges that are euell are the occasions of those thinges that are good: as when we say, that good lawes doe come of euell maners and conditions, to wit, by occasion not by effect.

13 Is any among you afflicted, let him pray.

These admonitions are annexed, and first that he which is afflicted and suffreth persecution, doe pray. For there is no more present remedie agaynst the miseries of this world then prayer proceeding from fayth. *Whatsoeuer sayth the Lord, ye desire when ye pray, beleue that ye shall haue it, and it shall be done vnto you.* And the reason thereof is very wel noted in the booke of Iudith chap. 9. where the most holy woman doth thus say in her prayer: *In the prayer of the humble and meeke hath thy pleasure bin euermore.* And Psalm. 49: *Call vpon me in the day of trouble* and

Prayer a speciall remedy in affliction.

Mar. 11. 24.

3. iiii.

A Commentarie vpon the

and I will deliuer thee.

Is any merie? let him sing.

What it is to
sing when we
are merie and
in prosperitie.

He counseleth him that is in prosperitie, to sing: by which counsel the Apostle teacheth three thinges. For first, when he biddeth vs sing, he will haue vs acknowledge God to be the author of our prosperitie. Secondly, he will haue vs extoll and prayse him, giuing him thanks for his benefites. Thirddly that we doe not with the world abuse our prosperitie to the contempt of God, but that we doe rather rest in the author thereof singing vnto him, and not attributing any thing to our selues. But the worlde dooth contrary: for it neyther acknowledgeth God to be the author of the felicitie which it enioyeth, neyther is it thankfull to him, so farre is it of that it singeth vnto God, yea it doth rather furiously triumph with prophane ioye and gladnes.

14 Is any sicke among you? Let him call for the elders of the Church, and let them pray for him, and anoynt him with oyle in the name of the Lord:

15 And the prayer of fayth shall saue the sicke, and the Lord shall raise him vp: and if he haue committed sinnes, they shalbe forgiuen him.

Why an-
noynting the
sick with oyle
is not nowe
vsed, but ta-
ken away.

He counseleth him that is sicke, what he must doe. First let him send for the elders as Phisitions of his soule. Then let the elders being called pray for the sicke and anoint him with oyle, not that he may die, but that he may miraculously be restored to health, as the Apostle here plainly speaketh. But seing that oyle was an outward signe of the gift of healing, which gift continued for a time to confirme the doctrine in the primitive Church, and nowe the Church hath not that gift: It were fond and foolish to keepe still the signe without the thing signified by the signe. That I may in the meane season say nothing concerning the idolatrous adirations and trust in the anointing, wherein was thought to be a most sure aide and defence

fence

fence agaynst the deuell, which kind of things they doe re-
tayne as yet in the papacie. Wherefore let vs leaue to the
papists their colour wherewith they may smere their dead
to be sent into hell. Moreover this place doth most ma-
nifestly confute the opinion of the Houatians, which de-
nied them returning to grace that had fallen after they
knew the truth. Wherefore this testimonie of James is
especially to be marked. For he sayth playnely: If they
haue committed sinnes, that is, (if they haue committed
any thing agaynst their conscience) they shalbe forgiven
them.

16 Acknowvledge your faults one to an other.

An other brieve admonition concerning pardoning one an-
others faults that hapned among them. For it cannot o-
therwise be, but that in this weakenes of nature and in
this most corrupt and as it were dotting olde age of the
worlde, many offences be incident, which the Apostle will
that we both acknowledge, & also pardo one an other. The
Papists interpret this place of the confession and re-
hearfall of our sinnes, which is made to the Priest, which
fayned deuise of theirs is not only contrary to the custome
of the Church, in the Apostles time (for such kind of con-
fession was unknowne to James and the other Apostles)
but also it is playnly confuted by the words of James,
who sayth: Acknowvledge your faults one to an other.
For if the interpretation of the Papists were good, then
not onely the lay man shoulde confes his sinnes to the
priest, but also the priest shoulde confes his sinnes to the
lay man, which their priestly dignitie can in no case away
with.

VVe must
pardon one
another of
fences.

Auricular cō-
fession falsly
gathered of
the Papistes.

And pray one for another that ye may be healed.

Another brieve admonition concerning mutuall prayers.
For he biddeth vs pray one for another that we maye be
healed, that is, that there maye be as fewe offences a-
mongst vs as may be. For I referre this to the health of

VVe must
pray one for
another, and
why.

Aa.i.

the

A Commentarie vpon the
the mindes and affections, which being sicke, many times
offences doe as it were certaine little sores burst forth.

For the prayer of a righteous man auayleth much, if
it be feruent.

¶ What the A-
postle requi-
reth in him
that prayeth.

¶ What is re-
quired in the
prayer of the
righteous.

A reason of that which went before, taken of the effect of
godly prayer. And note that as he requireth one thing in
him that prayeth: so he requireth an other in the prayer
it selfe. In him that prayeth, he requireth righteousness:
wherefore Paule also biddeth vs lift vp pure hands. This
righteousnes consisteth in two things, to wit, that he which
is about to praye, doth fully perswade himselfe that his sin
is forgiven him, and that he cast of all purpose of sinning.
For he that doth not this, doth lose his labour. In the pray-
er he requireth efficacie, that is, a singular feruentnesse
which proceedeth from fayth, whereby a man determi-
neth that he is heard through the merit and intercession of
the Lorde his mediatour.

17 Helias vvas a man vnder infirmities euen as vve
are, and he prayed earnestlye that it might not
rayne, and it rayned not on the earth by the space
of three yeares, and fixe moneths.

18 And he prayed agayne, and the heauen gaue raine,
and the earth brought forth her fruite.

A reason con-
firming the
prayer of the
righteous to
be effectuell.

A confirmation of the last reason by an example:

Helias prayed effectually.

Helias vvas righteous,

Therefore the prayer of the righteous is effectuell.

In steade of the *Maior* or first proposition of this ar-
gument the confirmation thereof is set downe, whereof
reade 17. *Chap. lib. 3* of Kings. But least any man except
and say that that was done because of the singular holy-
nes and merits of the man, he preuenteth them and sayth
that he was subiect to like passions as we are, inasmuch
as he was subiect to the same affections and infirmities
of the corrupt nature, that we are.

19 Bre

19 Brethren, if any of you hath erred from the truth, and some man hath conuerted him.

20 Let him knowv that he vvhich hath conuerted the sinner from going astray out of his vvay, shall saue a soule from death, and shall hyde a multitude of sinnes.

Diligence in furthering the saluation of their brethren is commended to the godlye, that one call another from the error of his way, that is, of doctrine and of life. Which he that doth, first saue the soule of him that did erre: secondly, hideth a multitude of sinnes, in as much as a sinner being conuerted by his admonition is reconciled to God, and his sins are couered with God and are thoroughly forgotten. But howe can a man saue the soule of a man from death? And how shall he hide a multitude of sinnes? By the ministerie, and not by his owne proper power. So Paule sayth that he did beget the Galathians, and writing vnto Timothe he sayth: In doing this thou shalt both saue thy selfe and them that heare thee. Although it belongeth to God only to saue, yet he adioyneth vs vnto him as it were associates, and ascribeth vnto vs for the ministeries sake, that, which in very dede belongeth only vnto himselfe. This ought to make y dignity of y ministerie of the word more commendable vnto vs, when we heare that we in procuring the saluation of men, are workers together with God, to whom he doth impart also diuine honour after a sorte. Howe a man doth hide a multitude of sinnes I haue nowe declared: he doth it not by power, but by doctrine and pardon. By doctrine he causeth the sinner to turne himselfe vnto God, who onely clenseth sin: by pardon while he hideth the faults of his brother. Herevnto pertayneth that saying: Loue couereth the multitude of sinnes. The Papistes, which of this saying doe gather, that man by his loue doth merite remission of sinnes, are deceyued, as the setting of one contrarie agaynst the o-

VVe must as much as in vs is, call our brethren from error both of doctrine and lyfe.

Howe a man may saue the soule of a mā.

1.Tim. 4.16.

Howe a man hideth a multitude of sins.

1.Pet. 4.8.

Aa.ii.

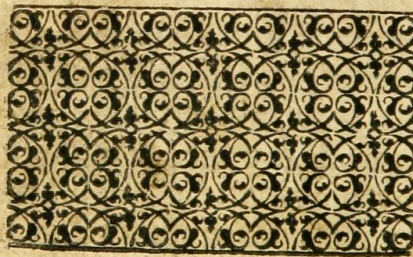
ther

1 p. 16. R. aut

A Commentarie vpon. &c.

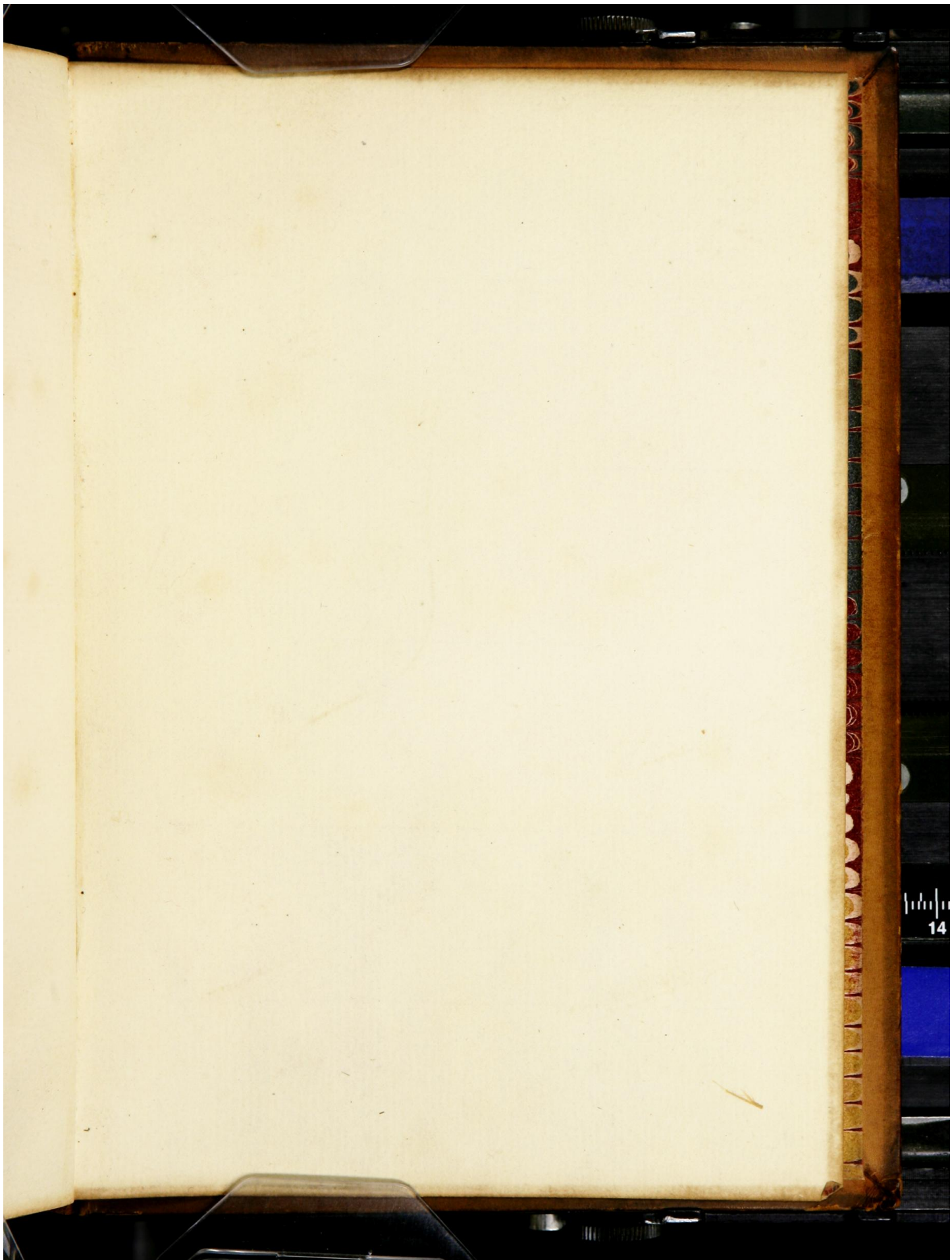
ther in Salomon doth sufficiently shewe: for there hatred
and loue are set one agaynst another, as contrarie causes
in contrarie effects: Hatred (sayth he) stirreth vp strifes:
but loue couereth the multitude of sinnes. For as ha-
tred is the cause of contentions among men,
so loue couereth faulces, eyther by
reforming them, or by
winking at
them.

FINIS.



re harten
arie causes
by strifes:
for as ha-
men,

XXXXXXXXXX



14

